

## AN ABSOLUTE MONARCHY.

BY MRS. H. C. GARDNER.

## CHAPTER I.

THE art of governing well is a suitable study for princes. In the old world, where princes are supposed to be scarce in proportion to the number of subjects, it is doubtless a sublime and awe-inspiring acquirement, though possessed by few; but it is only among a nation of sovereigns, like the American people, that the science of domineering can be perfected.

My uncle Zekiel's talents, in this line, are equaled by few, excelled by none. As the head, with its thinking powers, is supposed to control the rest of the human body and to direct its motions, so my uncle Zekiel, the head of a thriving family, controls and superintends all its movements, even to the tying of its shoe-strings.

It is more than a dozen years ago, that I, being then, as now, a confirmed invalid, went for a change of air and scene to spend the summer in the little seaport town where my uncle resided. It was my first visit to him, though he was the only uncle that I had on my mother's side. I felt as if I were going among strangers, for although I had seen my aunt once when I was a little child, and remembered falling into the brook with two of my cousins, and being judiciously whipped for the same, there had been no after intercourse between our families to promote love or acquaintance. So I felt a little strange and fearful, as the coach in which I traveled rattled down the long, single street of the village, and drew up at my uncle's door.

It was a warm day in June, and the doors and windows were wide open to admit the cool sea breeze. I had, in my own mind, associated with uncle Zekiel's home discipline, an idea of gloom and despondency that extended its shadow over both the house and its occupants, but my first glance from the coach showed me a tidy, comfortable-looking house, with a decidedly cheerful and home-like aspect. There were canaries singing in a cage that hung from a branch of the great cherry tree at the corner of the house; and snug little flower beds, with a number of early plants already in blossom, bordered each side of the walk. Best of all, I saw my aunt and two of my cousins bustling out

into the yard to greet me and to take charge of my luggage.

Uncle Zekiel was not at home, and I, perverse niece of greatness, was glad of it. Not that I was afraid of him, though a sense of his importance had been duly impressed upon my mind by my mother, who believed in it. He was her only brother, and she, with her four sisters, had been brought up to wait on him, to humor his whims, and so fit him to rule his own household. No, I was not afraid of him, but I distrusted my own ability to appear properly reverential.

I soon found myself quite at home with my new relatives, and more than contented with the place and the charming views from every window. A fine prospect of the bay with its myriad vessels and blue waves sparkling together in the sunlight, lay before the windows of the kitchen; and my cousins and I became quite merry over my attempts to use a telescope, through which, after many efforts, I managed to discern a hogshhead that stood in a neighboring yard.

It was tea time when my uncle came home. The children hushed their out-door sports, and sat down quietly in the corner as he approached the house; the white kitten stopped chasing the butterflies across the bank, and curled herself up close to the root of a tree; and the old house dog, who had been crossly snapping at everything near him all day, marched off to the barn with an air that seemed to say, "One bear at a time will do."

I think my uncle was glad to see me. I have been told that I greatly resemble his sister, my poor dead mother. He received me kindly, albeit his welcome was somewhat loftily expressed, and implied that my position as his guest did not exempt me from the privilege of being his subject during my stay. "I am the head of the family," said he, "and I exact obedience from every member of it. It does not signify *how* any person becomes a member of the family; it is sufficient that they are in it and subject to its rules."

I signified my acquiescence, but I could not, for my life, do so with a proper gravity of manner. I felt the smiles breaking out all over my

face, twitching my lips, and arching my eyebrows in spite of me.

"Well, Miss Polly, you are beginning finely. May I ask what amuses you?"

"My name is Mary, if you please."

A beseeching look from my aunt seemed to entreat me not to contradict him.

"Your name is Polly, Miss. It was your grandmother's name. She was a woman of great worth, and her name is not one to be ashamed of."

I am afraid my lips pouted a little, but I said nothing.

"Will you answer my question, Polly? I asked, what amused you?"

"I was thinking of you, uncle," I replied, promptly, smiling again as I recollected it.

"Indeed! Be so good as to say in what manner I excited your mirth."

His lofty way of catechizing me, so far from awing me as it evidently did his own family, appeared so truly ludicrous and trivial that I laughed outright as I replied, "Your looks and manner, sir, reminded me of those lines that Cowper puts into the mouth of Robinson Crusoe,

"I'm monarch of all I survey.  
My right there is none to dispute."

His face darkened, and again I caught my aunt's beseeching look. "Please excuse me, sir," I added, quickly, for I was really sorry to have occasioned any unpleasant feeling, "please to excuse me. I am easily excited by anything ludicrous, I inherit the disposition from my father, and I can't help laughing when anything so comical as—I mean," said I, hastily correcting myself, "when anything funny occurs."

He did not reply, and the rest of the meal time passed in silence. Once or twice, as I met his eye, and saw in its stern expression that he was trying to tame me with it, as one tames a wild beast, I nearly choked myself in my efforts to keep from laughing.

## CHAPTER II.

I HAD not been long in my uncle's house without finding out that, stern ruler as he was, my aunt had a shrewd tact in managing him, which really made him powerless. He had not the slightest suspicion that she ever had any will of her own, or that she had once dreamed of opposition to his requirements; yet, every day of his life, he was managed and shifted about like the wooden figures in a puppet show.

One evening, my aunt followed me to my room, in order to have a quiet, uninterrupted talk with me. I had expected her, for I had

been unusually bold at the tea-table, and had several times contradicted uncle Zeke, and held to my own opinions when they happened to conflict with his.

"It will never do, Mary dear," said my aunt. "If you reply to him as you did to-night, you will make my way very difficult."

"If you too would give him a little wholesome opposition, I think, aunt, it would soon cure him," I said, eagerly.

"No, no, child. It would strengthen his ideas in regard to domestic discipline, and only lead to extreme measures on his part. He would feel it a duty to reduce us to proper submission at any cost."

"Aunt, how do you manage to live?"

She smiled sadly at my earnest manner.

"This trait in your uncle's character annoys and mortifies me exceedingly when it is exhibited before strangers; but the most deplorable effect grows out of the necessity of outwitting him. I shudder often when I think how expert I have become in the art of deceiving. And I see no future when I may hope to be frank and sincere with him. If he would only trust me to take care of little household matters, I should be happy. But I didn't come in to load your weak shoulders with my anxieties. I wanted to tell you that when you bristle up and defend me or the girls, you do not help us, but rather add to our difficulties."

"Well, it does provoke me so to have to render an account for every chance expression that crosses my face, and to have my thoughts pumped out of me by force, and then discussed. Talk of the patience of Job! What are boils, or——"

"There, there," my aunt playfully shut my lips with her hand, "we will let the subject rest."

"But will Fanny go to her cousin's party?" I asked, anxiously; for, all day long, the poor girl had been teasing her mother to plan some way to get uncle's permission, and also to obtain some articles for a suitable toilet. It was to be her cousin Bertha's birthday *fete*, and only cousins were to be there, so there could be no objection on the plea of avoiding improper associates. I think it was seeing Fanny's anxiety that had made me so fractious at the tea-table. "Will she go, aunt?" I repeated.

"I think she will. But, Mary, you must not say a word in favor of it, if the subject comes up at breakfast. You can be silent if I request it as a kindness."

"Yes, aunt, and I promise to be silent when you do not ask it. I will never meddle again,

let him say what he will. I will be as meek as a—*as a sheep.*"

My aunt kissed me good night, and left me to my own reflections upon the little drama of life that was being enacted around me.

I went down to breakfast, the next morning, in very much the same frame of mind that would have been natural if I had anticipated seeing a circus. Fanny sat at the table with very red eyes, and a handkerchief in her hand ready for use. Perhaps she had been crying, but her sly glances toward my aunt, who looked heartily ashamed of something, were anything but sad ones. When uncle Zeke came in, he noticed Fanny's apparent distress at once.

"What's the matter now? Eh! Fanny?"

"I want to go to cousin's birthday party, but mother says you don't approve of parties, and she don't believe you will think it best to buy new lace for my sleeves or new slippers."

"I don't approve of a few cousins meeting together and enjoying themselves? Is that what your mother says? Well, you can just inform your mother that she is mistaken. You can go to the party, and here is the money to buy what you need. And when you want any pleasure again, you just come to me. I have not forgotten that I was young once. And always remember, Fanny, to love and honor your parents."

"Yes, sir."

"Wife, I do wish you would try to recollect that it is not your business to decide what shall be done in the family. And pass those potatoes, if you please. You seem to forget that we are to breakfast this morning."

After breakfast, when uncle had gone to his work, and I was helping Fanny trim her dress, I heard my aunt sigh deeply as she busied herself at the other end of the room.

"It's because of deceiving pa," whispered Fanny. "We have to do it, or we should never have any enjoyment, but it makes her feel bad. She says we shall all learn to be deceptive and tricky. But she is not to blame, is she?"

"Perhaps not," I said. I felt a little doubtful about it.

"You see," pursued Fanny, "he is always on the contrary side. We are obliged to humor him, and let him oppose and domineer. We could not even get our text-books for school in any other way. He would think it a great waste of money to buy them. But when we all pretend that we dislike study, and that we know enough already, he wakes up, you'd better believe. He buys the books, consults the teacher as to our powers of application, then comes home and asserts his authority, and

we have to study whether or no. Don't you understand?"

I understood it very well, but I shook my head. I was often troubled with doubts as to the propriety of doing evil that good might come; and, though I keenly enjoyed seeing my uncle outwitted, I had many misgivings as to its being right.

"Of course it seems strange to you," continued Fanny, "but there is no other way. We should all be public laughing stocks if ma did not manage. Why, the other day I went with Bertha into Bright's store, and pa was there buying that blue gingham that we are making into frocks for Jenny. He looked at a pretty piece of pink calico, a remnant, that Bright offered for half price. Pa said there was not enough of it for a dress. 'It would be a large pattern for little Jenny,' said Mr. Bright, 'as children's frocks are now made.' 'That indeed!' returned pa, 'I have my own views, Mr. Bright, as to what is suitable. I have bought this for Jenny, and, if it is made up as it ought to be, long enough to keep the child's limbs warm, there will be none too much of it.' 'Just as you please,' said Bright, politely, 'of course I am willing to supply as large a pattern as you wish.' I pinched Bertha's arm, and we slipped out into the street without pa's seeing us. You see he was looking at some abominably homely prints of huge plaids and wide stripes, to select a dress for me, so he was quite absorbed and did not look toward us."

"Where is your dress, Fanny?"

"Listen with patience, cousin. I am going to tell you. *Didn't* I hurry home to give ma a hint of the pleasures in store for us? Cousin Bertha laughed so, she had to sit down by the road and rest. But I didn't laugh. Those red, and orange, and blue plaids were still before my eyes; and little Jenny, too, with a long dress trailing over her heels."

"Well, dear?"

"Ma and I were all ready to receive pa when he came in. I suppose we both looked as harmless as lambs, and we showed no curiosity to inspect his bundle till he told us to open it."

"'What pretty gingham!' said ma, suddenly. 'Too pretty to cut up for such a little child! I declare, husband, I mean to make it up with long skirts!'"

"Eh? You do?"

"Yes. It will cut out more saving, and, besides, I shall not have to starch pantalets so often. It will save trimming them, too, for they will be out of sight. Her under-skirts will keep clean longer, and can be made of the

cheapest material, and colored ones will do as well as white."

"Have you got through, ma'am?" asked pa, oh! so loftily! "Because, if you have, I should like to be heard. I am the head of the family, if you please, and I shall decide how my children shall be dressed. You are not going to make them awkward and singular, just to save a penny. I have no fault to find with economy, ma'am: but stinginess is a mean trait in any one. You will please to make Jenny's frocks just as other children wear them. As to the saving of washing and starching, I never encourage idleness, and, with Fanny's help, I think you can do all the washing required!" Ma looked crest-fallen enough, but she always does at such times, because she is so thoroughly ashamed of the part she is acting."

"What of your dress, Fanny? Did he buy one for you?"

"Yes. I will show it to you when we go up stairs. It seems that ma had spoken to him about procuring some material for making a new quilt for the boys' bed. So as soon as she saw the print, she exclaimed, 'Why, husband, how could you think of buying such colors to make into a bed-quilt? I declare it is more suitable for a dress for Fanny, and, if you like it, love,' she added, turning to me, 'we'll make it up for you.' 'No, you won't. You will make it into a quilt.' 'But surely, husband,' urged ma, 'you will not permit Fanny to select a dress for herself? She is too young.' 'She must begin to spend money, ma'am, or she will never know how. If your parents had trained you to use money properly, I should not have to spend so much time in the stores. Fanny, here are three dollars for a dress. Use your best judgment in selecting it, take time to think and to calculate, and then purchase.' Now that ma had succeeded in putting everything straight, she felt so badly about deceiving him that she fairly broke down, and had a good crying spell on the spot."

"How did that affect him?"

"Oh! he took it as an evidence of submission to his authority, and I think he was rather pleased to see it."

I began to think uncle Zekiel must be an utter simpleton not to see the natural fruits of his overbearing system. I looked at my aunt with pity for her position, and real admiration for her genius and quickness of thought. She met my glance as I watched her, and smiled as she read the expression of my countenance.

"Truly, aunt," I said, "you are a woman of many resources."

She had been called out when Fanny commenced her story, and supposed that I referred to the morning's manning. "Do you think so, my dear? Do not seek to acquire them. There is nothing so charming to me as truthful words and frank looks. Pity me, if you will, but do not learn of me to be insincere."

"You are not insincere, mother," said Fanny, suddenly throwing down her work and coming to her mother's side. "Everybody knows how good and truthful you are, except where pa is concerned, and that you can't help. He obliges you to deceive him, and he is responsible for it. Isn't it so, Mary?"

I could not reply; and my aunt sighed deeply as she stooped down and kissed the childish lips so eager to defend her.

### CHAPTER III.

THERE is no place in which a man's worth can be thoroughly tested, except in his own home. If he is bearish and surly there, uncivil to his wife, or uncourteous to his guests; he may be as polite and attentive as he chooses in other spheres, but he is never a gentleman, and is never mistaken for one.

It is my opinion that my uncle Zekiel was not a gentleman. It would require a volume to hint even at all the ways in which his domineering spirit showed itself. No familiar conversation could be carried on in his presence because of his contradiction. He fatted on opposition, and it was a relief to everybody when he was out of the house. There was nothing too trivial for his attention. My aunt was never allowed to spend a penny for the smallest trifle without his permission. He selected her dresses, as well as the children's, and dictated how the smallest articles should be made up. I remember very well the severe reprimand that Fanny received for cutting a night-cap by a new pattern without his consent. The poor little thing never made its appearance in the wash-tub, or on the clothes-frame without being the subject of sarcastic remark. Such an abused little union of lace and cambric, I think, never before existed.

His superintendence extended to the smallest details of the kitchen, and ordered every dish that came to the table. We had queer tasting food sometimes; though generally my aunt's genius in anticipating his absurd whims, and her tact in getting the right kind of orders from him, made all right in the culinary department.

If visitors were expected, he was especially alert, and it required sharp practice on her

part to smuggle in the proper quantity of contraband spices, while his lynx eyes were upon her. It was no common sleight-of-hand performance to substitute, before his face, sweet marjoram and thyme for the sage and tansy that he had determined should flavor the soup, or goose stuffing; or to rub sufficient butter or lard into the pastry that he had foreordained should be mixed with buttermilk. Yet my aunt did all this, while he inwardly chuckled over her submission to his will.

It was in the latter part of August, that one of our neighbors proposed an excursion down the river, and a pic-nic in Sadler's Grove. It was five miles distant, and had for years been a place of popular summer resort. Each family in the neighborhood was to be invited; and besides the pies, cakes, and other eatables that could be carried, the genius of the grove was to supply a clam-bake and fish-chowder. The neighbors enthusiastically agreed to it, and much excitement in regard to the contributions to the feast reigned in every kitchen. Except uncle Zekiel's. He was out of town when the party was proposed, and no one had mentioned it before him. For a day or two we lived in hourly expectation of seeing him rush into the house with orders for us to prepare for the occasion; but the precious time passed till only one day remained, and he had not spoken. And not an egg could be beaten, not a chicken's neck twisted, till the word of command was uttered. Fanny was nearly wild with apprehension.

"What shall we do, ma? It will be too bad if we can't go. What does he mean? Only one day now to get ready in; though as likely as not," said Fanny, half-crying, "he would stay in the house to order the cooking, and I'd rather stay at home than to carry any of his heathenish messes for the table."

My aunt sighed, but said nothing.

"Don't you want to go, ma?" asked Fanny, impatiently.

"If we could go as others do, without plotting and hurrying, with peace in our hearts as well as smiles on our faces, I think I should like it. But if we could give it up, and say nothing about it, and you, Fanny, could be contented to remain at home, it would be a relief to me."

"We might as well give up living at once," was Fanny's undutiful response. "All the neighbors will be there; and those ladies from the city, who are visiting at Mr. Spalding's, are going; and William Mann, and—and Fred Webster are coming home from school to go,

and we must stay at home because a self-conceited, contrary old curmudgeon——"

"Fanny! my dear child! stop and think what you are saying. You shock me very much." My aunt's voice trembled, and the tears came into her eyes. I could see that she was blaming herself for this unfilial outbreak on the part of Fanny. The young girl softened immediately. "Forgive me, dear mother, I will be careful what I say. But when I think of what will be said about our oddity and stinginess, if we stay at home, I feel angry and ashamed. Now, ma, you can contrive to have us go. If you were young like me, you would not like to be singular or ridiculous. I declare," said Fanny, flaring up again, "I wish pa was either like other folks, or else was where—where he belongs."

"Be patient, my dear. Let me think about it. I want to do right. I like to gratify you, but this constant deception is so trying. I should like to be straightforward and truthful."

"Well, you can't. You might as well wish to be a—a patriarch. The question is how to make the best of what is. You are not to blame if pa forces you to deceive him. For my part I like to do it. I had rather cheat him than not. Don't sigh over that, ma, for that is something that can't be helped either. It comes as natural as my breath."

"Oh! Fanny, don't run on so. It makes me very sad to hear you."

"We've only one day, ma," said Fanny, returning to the attack. "Say that you will manage this once to gratify us, and it shall be an age before I will tease you again. Just this once, that's a dear, darling mother."

Fanny had her arms around my aunt's neck, and her coaxing smiles, and eyes moist with tears, were very persuasive arguments with the indulgent mother. I saw that she was yielding. "Let me think of it," she said, "till your father comes home. I am inclined to think he has not heard the pic-nic mentioned. In the meantime you can prepare currants and citron for cake, and weigh out the butter and sugar."

Fanny kissed her mother and ran off, perfectly easy in regard to uncle, now that an implied promise to manage him had been given. I awaited his return with a good deal of curiosity. I knew pretty well how the victory was to be gained, but the anticipation had a certain excitement in it that kept me from thinking of anything else.

At last he came. My aunt went very quietly about the supper, humming, as she worked, little snatches of music in apparent forgetfulness of uncle Zekiel's repeated admonition to

either singing out or let it alone. Now uncle Zeke did not like music, any way, and it always irritated him if he overheard any of us singing in concert, and thus dividing the enjoyment with each other; but to irritate him particularly, it was necessary for my aunt to hum over the air by herself.

"Do you know, husband," said she, pleasantly, as soon as his face looked dark enough, "do you know that Seth Doolittle has got up one of the foolishhest plans for a pic-nic, and expects the neighbors to join in it?"

"Seth Doolittle is a sensible man, ma'am. You will please to stop slandering your neighbors."

"But this is so silly," persisted my aunt.

"Silly! You being judge, I suppose. Where is the pic-nic to be?"

"Down in Sadler's Grove. They are going to have a clam-bake and chowder."

"When?"

"Tiring themselves out, and wasting a whole precious day besides," said aunty, meditatively.

"When?" thundered uncle Zeke. "Are you deaf? When?"

"On Wednesday."

"Well, it's the best thing I've heard of for a long time."

"You won't think of having our children go, husband?"

"They—will—go! And their parents also."

"Think of the expense."

"Expense is not the question. I am not so selfish as to only consider how this or that may affect my purse. There is nothing so promotive of neighborly good feeling as such little excursions in company. What would you have? Would you live in a desert? Not an innocent recreation can be proposed, but you must lift up your voice against it. It is well for the children that I am their father. A sorry life would they lead if I were not here to look out for them. Expense indeed! I shall go down directly and order Tucker's barouche for us to go in."

"At least," said my aunt, "do not oblige us

to follow the cook-book in our preparations. Rich food is unwholesome, aside from the expense."

"How many times shall I tell you that the open air is the only place where rich food can be taken into the stomach safely? Didn't I explain it to you last fall when we went to Plum Island?"

"Oh! dear!" said my aunt, resignedly. "Well, what shall I cook?"

"We will take chicken pie, cold tongue, fruit cake, and as many kinds of pie as you please. Don't spoil them by trying to economize. You may as well do it cheerfully, for I am resolved to go and to take you all. Now, wife, try for once to be reasonable. Here are our neighbors inviting us to join them in a harmless recreation, and you look as if you were invited to witness a hanging."

Uncle Zeke strode haughtily out of the house as he finished his harangue. He was sure of his authority now. Fanny gave way to hysterical laughter, and sat down flat on the floor to recover. I began to compliment my aunt, but the tears were in her eyes, and she only said, "Don't mention it. Forget it, if possible!"

I went up to my room before uncle Zeke returned; quite contented now that all was arranged for our appearance at the pic-nic with comfort and self-respect, I sat down by the open window to enjoy the beauty of the evening. By-and-by, I heard the gate swing, and directly after my aunt, calling in an agitated voice, "Husband! husband! Do hurry!"

"What's the matter?" He stopped short in the middle of the walk.

"Do hurry and see. The hogs have got out of the pen, and they are in the corn-field."

"What of that? It's my own corn and my own hogs. Don't be everlastingly a-meddling."

Well, uncle Zeke was obeyed, and we all went to the pic-nic. It was years ago. Last week I had a letter from cousin Fanny, and I learned from it that he is still the "head of the family."

## AUNT BETSEY'S BEST BONNET.

BY CARRIE E. FAIRFIELD.

"DEAR LIZZIE—My troubles increase, and the crisis seems to be near at hand. Do come and see me. I need you more than words can express. I cannot tell you about it now, but I must see you. Do not delay.

Your unhappy friend,

JENNIE BRADSHAW."

This appeal, it is needless to say, touched my feelings. Jennie Bradshaw was my particular friend, and the story of her troubles, with which I was pretty well acquainted, aroused my indignation.

Jennie Bradshaw was an orphan, and had been from infancy the especial charge of Miss Betsey Smith, the elder sister of Jennie's mother. To the trials and vexations which had all along beset the poor girl's pathway, I was no stranger, and now, at last, it seemed as if the crowning, culminating point of these distresses had been reached.

Jennie had, soon after leaving school, fallen desperately in love with a very accomplished and gentlemanly, but unfortunately, poor young man, a clerk in the only store of her native village. I suppose, for the sake of propriety, and my heroine's good name, I should have said that James Grayson, or "Jim," as he was oftener called, had fallen in love with her; but in truth, I think it would have been difficult to decide to which belonged the preference in the case. It seemed to be pretty nearly a case of mutual "love at first sight." But the seal of true love was not wanting, and trials arose in the pathway of this devoted couple only too soon. Aunt Betsey had a nephew, who was *par consequens* Jennie's cousin, who with Jennie was to be joint heir of aunt Betsey's small patrimony; and, of course, the old lady had set her heart upon seeing the two young people united.

Jennie Bradshaw, my handsome, stylish, accomplished friend, Jennie, marry Joe Lathrop! It was preposterous, as any lady but an old maid would have seen at once.

Various were the quarrels and embarrassments which had arisen out of this state of affairs. Of course, aunt Betsey "fairly hated the sight of that 'pizen' Jim Grayson," called him "etuck-up," and disrespectful to his bet-

ters; and as for Jennie Bradshaw ever marrying him, she never should.

Jim, meantime, didn't care a whit for the old woman or her dimes. Marry Jennie he would, if he died in the cause. Of course he made it in his way to meet Joe as often as possible, and to put on airs, and talk about cowards whenever he did meet him; while Joe grinned, and chuckled, and said, "They'll see who was who in the long run;" and Jennie cried, and pouted, was humble and downcast, and independent and spunky by turns.

Upon reaching Fair Haven, I found, to my dismay, that Joe and aunt Betsey, or rather aunt Betsey and Joe, for the old lady was certainly at the head of affairs, had insisted upon an immediate consummation of the marriage. Joe would be twenty-one in a month, and, on that day, aunt Betsey had decreed that Jennie should bestow upon him her hand, or forever leave the protection of her maiden aunt, who "could, on no account, think of harboring such an obstinate, undutiful creature another minute." Everybody knows that the complication of family affairs can never be described, and there were reasons in this case which not only made the execution of the old lady's threat certain, but also involved Jennie in indescribable embarrassment.

"It would seem so unfeeling, you know," said Jennie, "after all she has done for me, to leave her now, just when she is beginning to feel most heavily the infirmities of age. I think it would kill her to be left to the care of a stranger."

"Never fear," said I, "she has too much grit to die of heart-break, even if she had any heart, which I think exceedingly doubtful. It must have withered away from disuse long ago."

"No," said Jennie, firmly, "aunt Betsey has always been kind enough to me, as kind as I had any right to expect, except in this one matter, and, even here, I think she means to do what is for my good; only, ye see, Lizzie, she don't know anything about love, or rightly about James. But this I do know, I never will marry Joe Lathrop. I'll die first."

It was the twilight of a warm summer evening, and we were sitting in the still unlighted

parlor, when we heard the click of the gate-latch, and soon after the trotting tread of aunt Betsey upon the walk. She was accompanied by Joe Lathrop, who, however, at the door resigned into her hand a bonnet-box which he had been carrying, and left her to enter the house alone.

"Now, Jennie," said aunt Betsey, as she seated herself by the window which overlooked the garden, "just see here what that dear child has been getting for me. There never was another boy as mindful of an old aunt as he is of me, I do believe. Just look at that now, and see if you ever did see the beater o' that ere bunnet."

So saying, she drew from the depths of the band-box in her hand, the most singular piece of millinery which it was ever my fortune to behold. It consisted of a large open-work straw hat, about the size and shape of a coal-scuttle, trimmed in the most fantastic fashion imaginable, with pink and blue ribbons. Inside was a plaited *ruche*, which greatly resembled the cap-border of a newly-landed "emigrant," in which were stuck some gaudy artificial flowers.

"Did you ever see the beater o' that?" asked aunt Betsey, as she triumphantly exhibited this grand climax of the millinery art.

I could conscientiously aver that I never had.

"I did think," said the old lady, with a simper, "that it was a little too gay for me; but Miss Judkins said that the pink was very genteel, and the blue subdued it—yes, subdued it, them was her very words, and the colors is so fashionable, you know, Miss Judkins said 'twas; and then, mind all the rest, it was Joe's taste. And really I don't think its onbecomin' to me."

"Joe's taste" was tried on. Such a spectacle as it was, mounted upon the shrunken head, overshadowing the shriveled features, and the yellow frizzed hair! Jennie groaned in secret. "Foolish! frightful! ridiculous!" rose to my lips; for my life, or rather for the sake of Jennie's peace, I dared not speak. "Joe is very liberal," said Jennie, at length.

"Oh! yes," groaned aunt Betsey, in a resigned and sanctified way, "there ain't nothing that dear child wouldn't do for me. He's a perfect——"

A scream interrupted aunt Betsey's laudations, and we never knew the full extent of Joe's perfections.

"Look-a-there!—look-a-there!" exclaimed aunt Betsey, hastily dropping her miracle of the millinery art upon the window sill, "there's neighbor Godfrey's tormented cattle in my cabbage patch. Lizzy! Lizzy! run," and aunt Betsey

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sey, still adorning the nowhere-to-be-seen Lizzy, hobbled out of the house, and down the garden walk, raising her staff at every step, and screaming to the placid and stoical cattle, who were still cropping away at the cabbages, with that peculiar unction of gravity and self-satisfaction, nowhere so strikingly exemplified as in that dear animal. We ran out on the doorstep, but before we could reach the scene of action, Lizzy appeared in frantic haste, brandishing a broomstick, and put the army of intruders to rout. But alas! for aunt Betsey's rheumatics, the excitement of the moment had its necessary reaction, and we were obliged to assist her carefully to her own room, and put her immediately to bed. Jennie, like the dutiful girl she was, offered to remain and nurse her, but aunt Betsey preferred Lizzy's care, so Jennie returned to the parlor.

We had scarcely quieted our disturbed sensibilities, when a light, quick step sounded in the hall, and in the deepening twilight we recognized Jim Grayson's form as he entered the parlor.

"Good evening, girls," he said, in a low, but cheerful and animated tone. "Neighbor Godfrey's cows have cleared the coast for me, I take it, so here I am. What do you think of my stratagem?"

"Oh! fie, for shame!" exclaimed Jennie, "how could you do so?"

But James only saucily put his arm about her, and with a giddy whirl landed her by his side upon the sofa, where, but a minute before, I had deposited aunt Betsey's bonnet, which, in the excitement of the cow-chase, had been carelessly left in the window. There was a crashing of straw and a crushing of ribbon. Alas! alas! that elegant superstructure was ruined, and the blame thereof rested upon the devoted head of James Grayson. It was some minutes before James could be made to comprehend the full extent of the calamity; and even then, although his jolly visage was momentarily elongated, he was too happy in the presence of his charmer to be long cast down.

"There," he said, placing the remains of Miss Judkins' master-piece again upon the window seat, "the damp won't hurt the old nonsense now, I reckon; and if this is to be our last talk, Jennie, we won't have it marred by anything so slight as a trifle of crushed millinery."

But the chapter of accidents so strikingly opened had not yet closed. Scarce five minutes had elapsed till the gate again gave warning of visitors, and Joe Lathrop's heavy stride resounded on the walk.



"Hide, quickly!" said Jennie, in terror.

"I'll be hanged if I do," said Jim, valiantly. "Run from him? Catch me."

"But you *must*!" said Jennie, in terror, and our mingled earnest solicitations and entreaties at last prevailed, and Jim allowed himself to be most reluctantly forced into a closet at hand.

"Good evening, Jennie," said Joe, the next instant, at the same time acknowledging my not very welcome presence with a bow. You should have seen him then; tall, lank, and awkward, with straight hair, brushed in smooth, oily soap-locks about his temples. There was something so sleek and sneaky about him, that one's flesh crawled when he approached. His conversation was equally agreeable.

"I say, girls," he said, at length, "ain't it gettin' kind o' cold here? S'pose I shut this window?"

A heavy white curtain hid the bonnet from his view. He touched the spring, and awkwardly letting go the window, it fell with a crash directly upon the devoted bonnet. A simultaneous scream from Jennie and myself, drowned the exclamation of delight which sounded from the closet; and a light being just then brought in by Lizzie, Joe became aware of the mischief of which he innocently supposed himself the author.

He looked upon the crushed remains with a rueful face.

"Well, I never," he exclaimed. "There's three dollars gone. Who'd a thought that aunt Betsey 'd been such a fool as to have left a new bonnet in such a place as that?"

Unfortunately for Joe, aunt Betsey, roused by the crash to a remembrance of the neglected hat, rushed down stairs regardless of rheumatics, and appeared at the parlor door in a red flannel wrapper, just in time to hear this disrespectful speech.

"Joe Lathrop!" she exclaimed, "you good-for-nothing feller, to speak in such a way of your old aunt that brung ye up, and made ye all ye are."

Whether the weakness was in her rheumatic knees, or her rheumatic temper, I do not know; but just at this crisis, aunt Betsey broke down, that is, she sank helplessly into a chair, and burst into a fit of hysterical crying.

"Oh! dear me! oh! dear me! there ain't no end o' troubles in this world. It wan't enough that Godfrey's cows got in and et up every one of my cabbages; it wan't enough that I should get my death o' cold a chasin' on 'em out o' the garden; and, above all, it wan't enough that I

should have a new bonnet sp'iled that cost e'en a most three dollars, but this ungrateful fellow must call me careless afore my face and eyes—I, that have always had the name of being jest the carefullest, prudentest, savingest woman in all Fair Haven. Oh! dear me! oh! dear me!"

There are some men whom a woman's tears always subdue; there are others whom they only anger: Joe belonged to the latter class. Moreover Joe was parsimonious in the extreme, and the idea that he and his aunt between them should have demolished that wonderful structure, for which he had actually paid three dollars in hard cash, aroused his deepest sensibilities.

"I tell you what 'tis, aunt Betsey," said he. "Sniveling won't bring back the bunnet, nor the three dollars neither; you'd better stop crying, and see what can be done. Maybe Jennie and Lizzie can fix it up yet. I can't afford to spend three dollars for a bunnet every day. A man that's just goin' to git married and set up ter housekeepin', can't afford to be extravagant."

As may be imagined, aunt Betsey was by no means pacified, and a storm ensued which quite transcends my feeble powers of description. It ended, however, disgracefully to Joe, and he left the house, muttering something disrespectful about old maids; and aunt Betsey was put to bed the second time in a far more dilapidated condition than before. Her final expression of opinion, however, as she went up stairs was, "That she'd have another bunnet that should be jest twice as handsome as that ere one was, if it cost her all she was worth. She'd let young upstarts know who was who, that she would. Speakin' about gettin' married, and settin' up to housekeepin', and neglectin' his old aunt! Pretty times the world was comin' to."

"Hurrah! girls," exclaimed Jim, as he emerged from his concealment. "Didn't I tell you 'fortune favors the brave.' Sitting down on aunt Betsey's best bonnet will prove to be the best day's work I've done in a long time. I'll fix him now, see if I don't."

All our entreaties, however, were not sufficient to elicit the details of the plan by which Joe was to be "fixed." James only remarked shrewdly that "Judkins was an honest soul, and a good friend of his, and we'd see."

The next morning, aunt Betsey's chronic ailments—temper included—were greatly aggravated. However, so bent was she upon triumph, that toward evening she put on her calash and hobbled down to Mrs. Judkins' shop to order another "miracle of art."

Unfortunate she! Juddins had just received an order for wedding hats for Lawyer Grimse' family. "Corinthy Ann, the eldest daughter, was to be married next week, and all the girls was a comin' out in new bunnets, yellow crape with pink roses, six, all jest alike! You know, Miss Smith," said the obliging Juddins, "I'd accommodate you sooner, a great deal, than anybody else I know: but then you see what can't be, can't. Weddin's and funerals is exceptions to the common order o' things, and they can't be put off. Besides, Miss Smith, that ere bunnet o' yourn was a leetle uncommon, and I hain't got another left a bit like it, and it's too late in the season to get 'em from the city. So, raly, I'm afeard you'll have to wear your old one a little while longer, and, after all, 'taint a bad-lookin' bunnet, that o' yourn."

Aunt Betsey was a spectacle of wrath when she returned from Juddins'. To hear her rail about young folks in general, and young folks who contemplated matrimony in particular, made one doubt whether the institution had smiled on her advent into this world. Conscientiously, I think could she have had her own choice in the matter, she would have scorned to owe anything to it, even in that indirect way.

For some reason or other we had an unusual number of callers that day, and the story of aunt Betsey's misfortunes was repeated to every guest, each time with such additions and aggravations as her excited imagination could furnish; and, before night, she had fairly wrought herself into the belief that she was the most outraged—as she certainly was the most indignant—female in the community.

On the third morning a wonderful event startled our usually quiet household. When Lizzy opened the outside door she discovered on the door-step a neat handbox, bearing the inscription "Miss Betsey Smith," written in a rather elaborate, manly hand. Aunt Betsey was duly summoned; at first she was inclined to be cross, but, when the box was opened, and a handsome straw hat, of the fashion which aunt Betsey usually affected, trimmed with white ribbon, and pink roses, and green leaves, was triumphantly drawn from its depths, the shadow of a smile flitted across her wan and faded visage. But when upon the bottom of the box a note was found—the contents of which I transcribe—who shall paint her emotions?

"MOST DEAR AND RESPECTED MADAM—Lurking clandestinely about your house, which has

long been the temple of my most ardent, but alas! unhappy worship, I witnessed, with sincere grief, your misfortunes of Monday eve. Alas! that I should confess it, but my intense sympathy with the trials of her who has long reigned supreme in my heart constrained me to become conversant even of the undutiful behavior of your unworthy nephew. I assure you, my dear madam, I longed to inflict a summary punishment upon him, which nothing but a feeling of unworthiness to espouse so noble a cause restrained. I have endeavored, however, to make such slight amends as were within my power, and I hope the accompanying tribute may not be the less acceptable for having been ordered expressly from town. If you forgive my temerity, and condescend to accept the trifle, I shall be supremely blest. Ah! most inexorable of your sex, you little know the sleepless nights I pass on your account, or the hours which I spend in watching your window for one glimpse of your face. But I forbear, and hasten to subscribe myself

#### A MOST UNFORTUNATE LOVER."

It was wonderful, the blandness of aunt Betsey's physiognomy. With a pensive, meditative air she ejaculated, "Who'd a thought it?" The note had eclipsed the bonnet, and I was obliged, for fear of the consequences of this unlooked-for fit of sentiment, to urge the latter upon her attention.

"Yes, my dear," (the idea of her calling me a dear!) "it is very handsome, and to think of his calling it a 'tribute' too! I wonder who it can be?"

"Aunt Betsey," said I—I own it was wicked, but I have no tender mercies for old maids—"he seems to be in a very sad state of mind. Suppose you leave a note for him upon the gatepost to-night. He will be sure to find it, and it will comfort him so."

"So I will," she ejaculated, earnestly. "I never thought of that."

After carefully trying on the "bonnet," and venting her delight in several very extraordinary phrases, and declaring emphatically that she'd show Joe Lathrop yet, which solemn hint I construed into a threat to marry and disinherit him, she withdrew to her own room, and there, in solemn and mysterious state, concocted the note, which was to gladden the heart of the "unhappy lover." That afternoon I found the rough draft of it, which, with many erasures and underlinings, read thus:

"SIR—(Excuse me for not saying 'dear sir,' but a lone woman like myself cannot be too careful about propriety.)—Your beautiful

present was duly received. "Allow me to thank you a thousand times for your delicate," (the first draft read *delightful*), "kindness and consideration. No one could appreciate it but a lone woman like myself. My dear sir," (here the ancient spinster had evidently been transported by her feelings beyond the remembrance of the petty details of decorum,) "I fear you have not read my heart aright. I am far from being *inexorable*. Indeed no one can possess a more *tender* or *susceptible* heart than myself. But forgive me; I meant only to thank you for your kindness in sympathizing with the *destitute condition* of an unfortunate individual like myself. Your kindness touches my sensibilities. I walk frequently in my garden at twilight; if, on passing, you should ever see me there, I beg you will announce your proximity by some signal, say a whistle. I should like to thank you in person for your goodness; and if there is any favor which I can bestow upon you, *you may command me to the utmost*. I am sure, sir, after your delicate generosity, I could refuse you nothing.

Your lonely and unhappy friend,

BETSEY SMITH."

The note was duly deposited upon the gate-porch, and the next morning had disappeared.

At twilight of that day, aunt Betsey, arrayed in a snuff-colored muslin, with her hair most becomingly frized, and wearing her most bewitching cap, might have been seen walking leisurely, and with a face of grave and solemn import, down the garden path. A thin cambric handkerchief, doubled cornerwise, and spread carefully over her head, was her only protection from the damp night air, and Jennie watched her from our chamber window with real solicitude. Presently the slender form of our romantic aunt Betsey was lost in a clump

of lilacs, and at that instant Jim Grayson rushed into the house, accompanied by a minister, and exclaimed,

"Come down girls quickly, and let's have the job done at once. I've *carte blanche* from aunt Betsey, and here's the minister."

Jennie flew down stairs to expostulate, but almost amid her frantic gestures the minister commenced the ceremony, and in less time than it takes to tell it the twain were made one flesh. Jennie always declared that she shook her head negatively, instead of saying "yes;" but James insists that, as a woman's "no" always means "yes," she was all the more surely married. The newly married couple proceeded at once to the garden bower, and I, accepting the offered arm of the minister, followed.

To say that aunt Betsey's reverie was not rudely disturbed would be a mis-statement of facts; but Jim, in a gallant, off-hand way, announced himself as the "unhappy lover, *alias* the donor of the hat;" said so many gracious, and complimentary, and impudent things all in one breath, that the old lady's long-cherished animosity gave way, and she declared that she was only too happy to add her blessing to the match, and that the man, Mr. Grayson, was a very worthy young man, and had been most shamefully maligned by that good-for-nothing, ungrateful, careless Joe Lathrop.

In due course of time justice was done to Joe in the matter of the bonnet, but the feud was never healed.

Aunt Betsey's rheumatics took a very severe turn, in consequence of her undue exposure in the garden; but she still lives to bless (!) her great nieces and nephews, although Jim privately expresses the opinion that one more love-letter and twilight interview "would make a finish of the old saint."

## BOARDING AT A FIRST CLASS HOTEL.

BY MRS. M. A. DENISON.

### CHAPTER I.

THE momentous question was at length decided—Mr. and Mrs. Moore would board out. At first they thought of housekeeping, but Nora feared the pressure of care attendant upon such an establishment as they must keep up. In her mother's house, a low, rambling building, extending over half an acre or more, the rooms nearly all on the ground floor, she had found it easy to do the tasks allotted her; but young Lawyer Moore had just come into a large fortune, and, as was natural, he wished to enjoy it by living in a style befitting his wealth.

Harry Moore had passed twenty-nine years of bachelor life, before he saw the girl who seemed, in his eyes, fitted to bless him with the heaven of her love. He first met her at the house of Gen. Mott, a soldier distinguished in the annals of his country. Eleanora was on a visit there, and the sweet, sunny frankness of her temperament charmed him. He saw also that she was no fashionable idler—that she always had her self-appointed tasks. Whether they were her arduous attentions to the general's wants, while he lay ill of a Southern fever, or the homelier rounds of domestic keeping, she was equally gentle and graceful. He learned how deeply the heart may be interested in an unpretending, and almost plain woman—for Nora was not strictly beautiful, save only to those to whom she was as near an angel in all things as a mortal can well be.

After the beginning of this acquaintance, amid the show and formalities of city life, Harry sought the sweet girl in her own country home—a paradise of rural beauty. There the impression was only deepened. The bread that her own fair hands had made, he thought had never been equaled. Whether he saw the merry Nora, handkerchief on head, and fingers snugly ensconced in gloves, putting the cheerful rooms to rights, or coaxing up flowers from the brown garden mould, (it seemed sometimes as if her smiles alone would bring them,) he was equally charmed. The consequence was, Harry became a married man: "threw himself away," as his city friends had it, "upon a country girl," when he might have had so many brilliant chances.

But he was thrown away, and no help for it.

Many of his former admirers would have smiled at the cosy *tete-a-tetes* the young bride and groom indulged in previous to their marriage.

"What do you say to a tip-top house, free stone, swell front, and everything to match?" Harry asked, laughingly, one day. "I have a splendid chance to get one."

"For us two," cried Nora, "and servants to match? Why the cook would rule me, and the chamber-maid wear all my nice dresses. I tell you frankly, I don't yet want the huge care of large housekeeping."

"But you say you could not live idly; I am sure you would not enjoy hotel life then."

"But why need we be idle in a hotel, any more than in a dwelling house?"

"Why, my dear, the servants are expected to do all the labor there."

"That depends," said Nora, laughing. "Say we had a fine suite of rooms, three would be sufficient—it would give me just employment enough. How dearly I should love to take care of them!"

"But—what would *they* say?"

"There! I never expected to hear a man broach that question. If I have your approbation, and the approval of my conscience, what do you suppose I care what they say? I will put my heart and hands beside any of theirs, and see if they are not every whit as white. And then," her cheek flushed as she straightened herself, "I should glory in the independence. I *do* like to be original."

"And original you certainly will be, in this scheme," said Harry, looking at her with admiration in his glance. "I shall not gainsay it, as it is absolutely necessary, you tell me, for your health, that you should perform manual labor of some kind, daily. As to what 'they say,' I only spoke in sport; I am as indifferent to the gossip of a hotel, or a community, as you could wish me to be. I am to stipulate then for rooms, but not for help?"

"You need say nothing about the latter clause," laughed Nora. "I'll see to that, as of course I shall need some little assistance. But come, mother is calling us to see the cake, it is her *chef d'œuvre*, of course"

Away they went into the great kitchen, two

as noble beings, as fitly mated as the world has ever seen.

## CHAPTER II.

It was a serene day in autumn. The stir and bustle of the noisy city came in a muffled undertone to the room where sat two young ladies conversing. One of them was very evidently a bride, for near her elbow stood a centre-table covered with silver, the elegant gifts of friends. She was a pale blonde; and the robe of white, so daintily edged and flounced, certainly heightened her beauty not a little. Delicious perfume floated on the air. There was drapery of lace and silk everywhere: luxury and high-toned fashion predominated.

The other, quite young and also handsome, sat with her bonnet on, a trifle of a parasol dangling from one white gloved hand. She too was attired in the latest mode of morning outdoor toilet. She had evidently been admiring the numerous articles spread before her, and a pleased smile still parted her lips.

"I wonder who is going to take the third suite of rooms on this floor?" said the fair Mrs. Lasselle, who had sold her heart to a man forty years older than herself.

"What is the style?" asked her friend.

"Red and green damask—beautiful! I should have preferred it to this, for I am not partial to blue and gold, though it rather suits my complexion, you know; but Mr. Lasselle is quite set in his way, and I wanted to please him. It's somebody who is wealthy, that's certain. Oh! my dear Mrs. Lyle," she said, as a new guest entered, "I'm delighted to see you."

"How do you find yourself this morning?" queried the new comer, whose light silk morning wrapper trailed along the rich carpet, "I was so lonesome I thought I must call. How do you do, my dear Miss Dean? Really, I haven't seen you for an age. Now you mustn't think," turning to Mrs. Lasselle, "I've come here just because I was *ennuied*, not at all: but I've such news to tell you!"

"Do enliven us, I beg you, Mrs. Lyle," murmured the bride, languidly, "I am so longing for a bit of gossip."

"Well then, dear, to begin at the beginning. You know Mr. Harry Moore, that very handsome young lawyer?"

The cheeks of Mrs. Lasselle crimsoned instantaneously.

"Twas acquainted with him," she replied.

"Yes—so Mrs. Mervin said. Indeed, I think she hinted that he was quite pointed in his attentions before Mr. Lasselle came along.

However, that's neither here nor there—this same Harry is married: and *who*, my dear, do you suppose he has taken for better or worse?"

"I'm sure I can't guess," said the young bride, with a faint laugh; "Mr. Moore was always a peculiar being."

"I should think so. Well, cousin John Hathaway wrote to his wife, last Monday, and told her all about it. Everybody who knows him and his elegant tastes is astounded, I assure you. Why, my dear, he has married a country girl, a plain, common creature, who, I dare say, knows no more about the proprieties of city life than a country kitchen. And then, to cap the climax, he is going to bring her here, right into this hotel."

"Then it's for him," cried the bride, aghast.

"Yes, it's for him that those beautiful rooms are taken. Isn't it outrageous, for there's no denying they are the best in the house? And, no longer ago than last night, a friend of my husband applied for them—would have given any price for them—is willing now to offer a handsome bonus for possession. But it's impossible; the rooms have been engaged over a week, and we may soon expect this creature to preside over them in state."

"It will be solitary state, then, for I don't mean to be more than merely civil," said Mrs. Lasselle.

"I don't intend to be even that," said Mrs. Lyle, contemptuously. "Likely as not she was a drudge of a school teacher in some out-of-the-way village: and it isn't at all probable that she has a single connection to be proud of. Only think, she makes butter and cheese; and, in fact, I dare say she works harder than the girls in this hotel; yes, and likely is proud of it. She needn't expect to gain any sympathy here for her vulgar notions. I shall cut her outright."

"She *may*, however, be a refined and intelligent woman," said Miss Dean, who had once been (before she was adopted by a wealthy uncle) a country school mistress herself.

"Impossible, my dear Miss Dean, from what my cousin's wife said. She is the daughter of a farmer, and her father, having long been dead, it is likely they were in very reduced circumstances; that is what I inferred, at any rate. Mr. Moore is, however, rich: you heard, likely enough, what a large fortune his grandfather has just left him."

The cheeks of Mrs. Lasselle burned again. If that fortune had but come a few months sooner, perhaps it might have altered the whole

tenor of her life. For she was certain, or thought she was, that Harry once loved her.

"I do wonder how she will act here!" Mrs. Lyle said, laughing, as she drew out her crochet needles and commenced to work. "If there is anything I have a real contempt for, it's a gawky woman. Now it isn't at all probable that Harry Moore would marry a woman entirely ignorant of good manners; but, bless you, we women can always tell the gawky or the boor: for it is so hard trying to conceal either. However, we shall have our fun, no doubt."

"She will make a sensation you think then, if it is only for your fun," said the gentle Miss Dean. "Now I prophesy you will be completely disappointed in her."

"Do you know her?" eagerly inquired both ladies.

"No. I have not even heard of her, certainly not seen her; but I feel impressed that she must have some remarkable points, or Harry Moore would never have been attracted by her."

"Oh! love is blind, you know," said Mrs. Lyle. Miss Dean rose to take her leave, while the two ladies, both young and but recently married, lingered together to chat and surmise.

### CHAPTER III.

"WELL, so the new arrival is really here," said Mrs. Lyle, one evening, not long after. "I suppose we shall see her at breakfast."

"Julia, the second chamber-maid, says they will breakfast in their room," said Mrs. Lasselle.

"What, as a general thing?"

"Yes, as a general thing."

"Mighty aristocratic! But no; here is the reason, you may depend. He's afraid of the public breakfast. If ever a woman shows want of tact, taste, and good breeding, it's in a breakfast toilet. That's proof positive that he's a little afraid and ashamed. I declare I feel bad for, and provoked at, him. I saw him just now, and positively he's the most splendid man in the hotel. Looked happy, too, poor fellow—he's one of that kind, you know—will mask his face in smiles if his heart should be aching. It provokes me to see such men throw themselves away. All our set are dying to see the bride. There's little Donizelli, that Frenchman's wife, she does say the oddest things in her broken English. Said she this morning, 'Such Apollo Belvidere ought to have one of de graces for his husband.' Did you ever? 'For his husband.' She didn't notice her mistake, and the whole table was laughing: she thought, doubtless, at her wit."

At that moment a heavy step was heard. The ladies were in Mrs. Lasselle's room. A gouty step it was, matched by a disagreeably plethoric cough, and the regular tap of an advancing cane, whose point was shod with iron. The door opened, and an obese old man entered, bald-headed, a silk handkerchief tied about his temples, his clothes dusty, his whole appearance that of a man who prided himself on whatever was his, dirt included, and dirt especially. This was Mr. Lasselle. He kissed his wife first, she turning her head hastily away, then said to her guest, "Don't move, Mrs. Lyle—don't move," and stamped toward the register.

"This room isn't warm enough," he continued, "it never is warm enough to suit me. I wish you'd pay a little more attention, my dear, to the register, or I must get some one to come up and attend to it for you. Do it if you say so—plenty of money, you know—do it if you say so."

"Oh! I'll be more careful," said Mrs. Lasselle, with reddening cheeks. "But did you know how very much soiled your boots are? Do you want your slippers?"

"Siled, ho! ha!—siled, are they? Well, I can afford it—I can afford it."

So little removed from dotage was the old man, that he continually repeated himself, and before his wife could recover from her mortification, he muttered, "I can afford it, at least six times," meanwhile tracking the dried mud all over the carpet.

"We've got Moore here, they say; used to be your old sweetheart, eh, lovey?" continued he, turning to his wife and chuckling. "Handsome fellow, very—and yet she preferred old Lasselle, eh?—she preferred old Lasselle. Well, she shan't regret it—she shall ride in a carriage all the days of her life—yes, all the days of her life—of her life, eh! of her life."

Mrs. Lyle arose to take her leave.

"Oh! now, Miss Lyle, don't go 'cause I've come. Old saying is three ain't company, I know, but don't think much of old saying. How's Bob? I call Lyle Bob—used to be college-mate o' mine, you see, in the days o' Lang Syne. Pretty gray, isn't he, well as myself? Ought not to be; in the ile business, eh? ho! ho! ha!—in the ile business—ile business."

The ladies glanced at each other involuntarily, as the old gentleman began to cough in a snuffy handkerchief. Oh! how much—had there been an interpreter near—did that glance signify?

"Thank heaven! if my husband is old, he isn't quite a bear," Mrs. Lyle said, on the same

day, to one of her dearest, most fashionable friends. "There's that poor Mrs. Lasselle, to see what she suffers when that old ruffian spits about, and uses the carpet for mat-scrappers. It's shocking—it's abominable! I wonder she could marry him."

"Why, Jenny, dear, he is a millionaire! Who would not put up with oddities?"

"But—vulgarity!" echoed Mrs. Lyle, with a contemptuous face.

"Oh! well, he'll die soon, perhaps, and if she only works her cards right, he'll leave her the bulk of his fortune; then won't she be a very, very interesting young woman? By-the-by, she's a blonde—would look charming in mourning. How nice it is to be beautiful! Emma Lasselle was a poor girl—a *very* poor girl. I wish I was handsome, I know of some chances I'd have."

#### CHAPTER IV.

"DEAR, dear Harry, what beautiful rooms!"

"I thought they would suit you, my little wife," said Harry, smiling to see with what grace Nora fitted the luxuries he had prepared for her. "I bought that maroon sofa because it is so like your mother's, in that never-to-be-excelled parlor at home; and that lounge, because you admired the one at the general's. I had it made exactly by his pattern."

"Oh! how good, how good and kind you are, Harry. I shall never forget it."

"I hope not," said her husband, demurely. "Indeed, I don't intend you shall, because if ever you grow naughty, you know, I shall immediately begin to enumerate the fine things I have given you."

"I must unpack my trunks," Nora went on, giving him one of her glad, bright smiles. "I must choose a dress for the morning, I suppose."

"Of course you must, and the prettiest one you have, since I shall be your only company."

She looked at him a moment, not comprehending.

"I mean that I have ordered that we shall have breakfast brought up."

"Oh! I'm so glad!" was Nora's exclamation. "I wish we could have all our meals so."

"Oh! no. I want to show you off. I have a score of friends here, who would take it very unkindly if I should shut you up like a selfish curmudgeon."

"Any ladies?" queried Nora.

"Plenty; so put on your very handsomest face when we go down. Let me see; there are

three, certainly, I used to know: two of them are miserably married to rich old grandfathers; but the other, I believe, is happily wedded."

"So your plenty has dwindled down to three," said Nora, mockingly; "I am not afraid of three."

This was near evening, and Nora was much too fatigued to go down to supper.

On the following day, the first chamber-maid appeared at an earlier period than usual in the rooms of Mrs. Lasselle. She was short, dumpy, red-armed, red-haired, and as plethoric as the old merchant Lasselle himself.

Mrs. Lasselle was not above entering into confidential chit-chat with the girls in the hotel. She knew there was something on the chamber-maid's mind, by the way Nannie swung her flaming arms around.

"Well, Nannie," said Mrs. Lasselle, who was trimming a very showy head-dress, "I suppose you've seen the new boarder? You're more favored than we are."

"Indeed I have, ma'am!" exclaimed the girl, with unusual brevity of tone; "and it's little I cared if I never see her no more—indeed it is, Miss Lasselle. There ain't no ladies as takes people's work right out o' their hands, without as much as y'r leave. Oh!" and she slammed the dust-pan into a corner with a most desperate vindictiveness.

"Why, what has she done, Nannie?"

"Done, ma'am," and Nannie for a moment deposited her brawny arms on her hips, her hands hanging down in utter impotence of indignation—"done!" It's enough to make a female despise her. Don't you think," and here Nannie lowered her voice mysteriously, "I went to her rooms an hour ago, thinking how I would do my best at keeping 'em nice, as I keeps all these handsome rooms, when she says, says she, without hardly looking up, says she, 'Oh! I've preferred to do most of the work myself; there's only this and that to attend to!' I declare to you, ma'am, if I wasn't struck dumb: and she spoke it as topping, too, as if she'd been the greatest lady in the land."

"You don't mean to say!" cried Mrs. Lasselle, with intense horror, "you can't mean to say, Nannie, that her work was absolutely done, that Mrs. Moore did it herself?"

"She was that little of a lady, ma'am; indeed yes, and it were so intirely and insolutely. She was fixed up as grand as you please, besides. Thinks I to meself, well, if ye're your own body servint and house servint, much good may ye git for your services, but I'll be boun' you won't git much thought of by the ladies in *this* house,

who is real ladies, as most of 'em is, Miss Lasselle."

"Why, what a low-born creature she must be!" exclaimed Mrs. Lasselle, catching again at the ribbons which her astonishment had caused to drop, "of all things I *ever* heard of, boarding in a first class hotel and doing her own work. Well, if that isn't something to talk about! I guess Harry Moore is very proud of his wife;" this she said rather to herself. But the housemaid caught it up.

"Well you may say, ma'am—well you may say you guess he's proud of his wife. Why, ma'am, what didn't he brought her down to breakfast for, if 'twan't that, he's dead ashamed ov her? If I was the woman, for the sake of me husband, and he such a splendid gentleman, I'd do as others did, wouldn't I though?"

Before noon the confidential whispers grew louder. Mrs. Lasselle had flown to Mrs. Lyle's room with the announcement, Mrs. Lyle had gone to her neighbor, she to the next, and so on the entire length and breadth of the hotel. The matter was duly canvassed, laughed over, sneered at, by all the lily-fingered women who did nothing for whole blessed days but sit, eat, dress, visit, and sleep; and the boarders *en masse* resolved to let Mrs. Moore know that they did not consider her a lady.

Dinner was never more impatiently awaited than on that particular day. Mrs. Lasselle imparted her opinion to several of the boarders. It was to the intent that she had no doubt Harry Moore felt thoroughly ashamed of his wife, and that very likely she would make her appearance in sea-green, red, or some ridiculous color. The great gong sounded while Nora, utterly unconscious of the commotion she had raised by her simple habits, had just put the finishing touch to her toilet. It was exquisite; her husband said, exultingly, that she looked like a little queen. Everything was rich, but nothing elaborate. The pure laces, that encircled the throat and hung gracefully over her arms, were of the softest, most costly fabric. Her cheeks were touched by a natural crimson, the full folds of her robes hung faultlessly—she was as charming as a picture.

At least she created a sensation when she entered the dining hall. Eyes fell, confounded; lips were hopelessly parted, and but little said. Could that graceful creature, with a face not strictly beautiful, but extremely striking, even fascinating; with hands white and clear as those of an infant; and with such faultless manners and quiet self-possession, be the woman who did her own house work, the untaught country

girl? I fear that appetites were lost that day, and dainty articles sent pettishly from the table. Such gossiping as ensued! And worse than that, they would not tell the truth about her; but agreed that she had no style, was *very* plain, but appeared rather better than they had anticipated.

## CHAPTER V.

MEANWHILE Nora went on the even tenor of her way. It hardly seemed like hotel life to Harry, this pleasant, secluded room was always so lighted by the cheerful smile of his wife, so beautified by her presence, more than gilding, paneling, and rosewood could make it. When he asked her how she got along with the ladies in the house, she always laughed in a merry way, and said they treated her very well. In fact, she liked their distance better than she would their warmest friendship. She was never lonesome, and had no tact for fine talk or fashionable sentiment, and she did not particularly admire the boarders. Her books, her flowers, her household avocations, and her pen occupied her constantly; these, with music, constituted the home enjoyments of the young couple.

"She will do *very* well," said Mrs. Lyle, one day after passing Nora in the hall, "and I see she has a new set of furs. Such extravagance, Mrs. Lasselle, they are actually the very set we prized of Bentons, and cost a thousand dollars. No one can deceive me in furs; I'm a capital judge; can detect an imitation at once: hers are real Russian sable, none of your *méde* Hudson's Bay. Yes, she's rather interesting: but who is she?"

"True enough," queried Mrs. Lasselle, "who is she? I expect you might know her twenty years and she'd never tell. She's one of those close-mouthed beings, and, I guess if the truth was known, she don't care about telling. I'll tell you what I think, Harry Moore had educated, and is still educating her. She goes out regularly every day to take music lessons, no doubt; for I hear a hammering on the piano in that direction."

"My dear, let us go into the parlor, to-night," said Harry, one day. "We are making ourselves rather exclusive, are we not? At least once a month, perhaps, it would be good policy to visit that room of chandeliers, Saxony carpets, and gilding."

"Just as you say, Harry," replied Nora. "I tried to fraternize two or three times, and went into the parlor when I knew the ladies were there. But most of them were so occupied with callers; and—oh! Harry," she raised her large,



brown eyes to his face—"did you know they flirted?"

"Who flirted?" queried Harry.

"Why, the ladies, I never saw anything like it."

"Well, well, we won't talk about that, little mentor; but come, get ready, and we'll take a survey below."

Dressed in a tasteful blue silk, Mrs. Moore entered the parlor with her husband. There were nearly twenty couples there, some of whom Mrs. Moore was on speaking terms with: others she did not know. It was surprising how very pleasantly the ladies chatted with Harry, and how seldom spoke to his wife, beyond advancing some simple remark.

"Why, Mr. Moore, do you know who Mrs. Moore is talking with?" asked Mrs. Lasselle, growing suddenly animated.

Harry looked across the room. There sat Nora, her face aglow, chatting in her sweetly gracious manner to a tall man rejoicing in a full beard and moustache, eagle eyes, and a Roman nose.

"If I am not mistaken, it is the Spanish Charge, who is stopping here for a few days. Ah! I see—Mark Grafton, my friend, must have introduced him."

"But, Mr. Moore, he scarcely speaks a dozen words of English; he is studying constantly, they say."

"Oh! I know, but Nora has spoken both French and Spanish for years. She is very likely talking with him in one or the other of those languages. Poor fellow! how delighted he seems! she must be using his own admirable dialect."

Mrs. Lasselle's face changed to a deep crimson: she felt uncomfortable. This little woman was her superior in one thing—perhaps in many."

"There's a sign that she wants me," said Harry, laughing, and hurrying toward her with all the fresh joy of a lover.

"Harry dear, Mr. Bonsuler is so anxious that I should sing. What shall I do?"

"Gratify him, by all means," returned her husband. "Come," and he led her to the piano. That hour the great dames of the A— House had the satisfaction of listening to a few beautiful songs, both in French and Spanish, sang in superb style. They looked, they flushed—they bit their lips: in fact, they were chagrined beyond all expression. But they had taken a prejudice which they were not likely soon to give up. The blooming, smiling, happy wife of Harry Moore had rebuked them too plainly,

unconsciously though it was done, to become a favorite with these merely purse-proud automats. The glow of health that brightened cheeks and lips came naturally there, because she obeyed the laws of her being, and despised helplessness and inactivity. Her eyes beamed with the innocent light of a deep felt joy, for such things as petty malice, jealousy, backbiting, flirting, had never troubled even the surface of her-soul. So the more they wondered and gossiped about her, the more grew wonder, and the bitterer gossip, till they had managed to set the report afloat, nobody knew how, nor who by, that Harry Moore's wife was a prodigy—that she had been taken with some gentleman's family when very young on account of poverty: and nobody knew what else.

Of all this Nora was ignorant. She did not aspire to the close communion of such women as Mrs. Lyle and Mrs. Lasselle, though they were the wealthiest ladies in the house, were quoted and followed by the smaller fry: and kept their own carriages. There were, however, some congenial minds in the A— House, who, while they did not aspire to the first floor and costly suites of rooms, were unmistakably nobler in their possessions than many of those who did.

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## CHAPTER VI.

"My dear, I have great news to tell you," said Harry, as he came home one evening. "I am certain it will astonish you."

"I should like to be astonished," said Nora, simply.

"Well, then, listen with all your little ears. Uncle Mott, Gen. Mott, I should rather say, is up for the presidency."

If Harry had expected astonishment, he was not disappointed. Nora sprang from her seat, her eyes dilated.

"Harry Moore, is it possible?" she cried, almost wildly.

"Nora Moore, it is possible," was the response: "read the papers."

"I never could have believed it of uncle Mott," said Nora, after she had run her eye eagerly over the intelligence; "he is such a peculiar man, so fond of home and quiet! What can have happened to change his mind, for I see he has shown no objection to the nomination?"

"Oh! political friends!" laughed Harry.

"But he is so old!" urged Nora.

"Old! Hale sixty, and a constitution like iron: bless his russet cheeks. Did you see, they are going to get up a reception in this

very city, and arrangements are made for the old general to come to this very house?"

"Capital! then I shall see him, dear old uncle!" cried Nora.

"Yes, after the procession. It's arranged that they will meet him on the outskirts of the city at nine or ten. The show will pass by here, I suppose; I heard them hinting about flags, and streamers, and a grand illumination in the evening. Of course there'll be an accompaniment of fire-works kept up by the outsiders, plenty of music and fun. In the evening, if the old man isn't too fatigued, we'll have him to ourselves."

"Yes, indeed!" Nora's face glowed with pleasure, "only think! I haven't seen him for six months. Dear old uncle, how kind in him to send me those beautiful furs before he went traveling last winter! I rather think," and she looked up slyly, "I was an object of some little envy whenever I wore them."

"I shouldn't wonder if you were an object of some little envy even without them," said Harry, laughing.

Perhaps at the same moment, certainly on the same evening, Mrs. Lasselle and Mrs. Lyle, who were fast friends, were talking upon the same subject.

"Mr. Lasselle, who is a great politician, you know, my dear, intends to illuminate our suite splendidly. It will be a grand procession; husband is appointed one of the marshals. Dear me—how will he look on horseback?"

"Did you ever see the general?" asked Mrs. Lyle.

"I never did. I suppose he will make his appearance at the *table d'hôte*. Dear me, what shall you wear, Mrs. Lyle? I believe I will put on my now peach-color, one wants to look one's best before the old hero. Mr. Lasselle met him once in New Orleans, was introduced to him, so I suppose upon that etiquette he may claim acquaintance. They say he is splendid-looking indeed. I should judge so from his portraits."

"We are going to have seats in the lower balcony. I hope you have engaged yours," said Mrs. Lyle.

"Bless me, I never thought of it! Do you think it possible that they are all taken up?"

"I shouldn't wonder," was the reply. "They have already been numbered. Harry Moore and his wife, it seems, were offered the first choice, so they have the most eligible seats."

"I do think our landlord is strangely taken with that little Moore. Do you notice how attentive he is to her? All her wants supplied almost before she speaks. One thing I know:

she is a mighty cunning piece, in spite of her demureness. But I really must have a seat in the lower balcony. By-the-way, did you observe, yesterday, that the governor's carriage stood at the door?"

"Oh! yes, Mrs. May told me. She says the governor's lady and niece called upon some one here—the Ellises perhaps; I heard that they were acquainted. We never know, though, upon what footing persons like Mrs. Ellis stand with people of settled gentility."

The speakers little knew that the call had been made on Mrs. Moore.

That evening Mr. Lasselle secured the coveted seat, bringing home some beautiful arrangements in the way of illumination. For a week nothing was talked of but the expected reception. People came and sent from all quarters to engage rooms at the A—— House. Stacks of flags and decorations were set down at the entrances, and soon fashioned into draperies of every size and form. Over the great entrance, arranged in starry letters, each an illumination, were words, "Welcome to the hero." In every window were wreaths, and ovals, and countless devices for beautifying the expected night. Across the street an arch was thrown, to be hung with colored lanterns: in short, every means was resorted to that the reception might reach far beyond the excellence of previous orations.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE expected day was ushered in with a cloudless morning. At an early hour the streets began to be thronged with spectators. Every carriage and coachman, every ragged boy that ran barefooted in the gutters, every pedlar, every wheelbarrow, underwent the scrutinizing glances of the crowd, who had come hither to look, and intended to overlook nothing. Now and then the music of a distant band caused a simultaneous rush forward, but nothing was to be seen till the hands of the ponderous city clock pointed to eleven, and the children, tired of the heat, the inactivity, and even of the candy with which their little hands were filled, began to cry for sensation. The front of the A—— House was crowded with beauty. The splendor of the dresses; the flashing of jewels, bright eyes, and brighter smiles, made a spectacle as admirable as need to have been desired; and the crowds opposite appeared to think so, for they scarcely turned their eyes from the teeming tiers. On the lower balcony, which was protected from the sun by an awning of bright silk, sat the chief ladies of the A—— House, or who

ever had procured that privilege by the aid of gold. Mrs. Lasselle and Mrs. Lyle were dressed with great splendor, while Nora wore only a plain black silk, and no jewelry. Presently there was a distant gleam and glitter, a loud flourish of trumpets, and lo! the conquering hero came. First there were bodies of cavalry; then foot companies in elegant uniform; then marshals and old citizens in barouches; then, closely hemmed by the crowd, the noblest Roman of them all, surrounded by state dignitaries, his white hair blown over a massive and bronzed forehead, his handsome features lighted with martial enthusiasm, his heart cheered by the warm greeting of the people who shouted along the line.

"Here he comes. There he is. That must be he standing up just now," were the various exclamations of the occupants of the lower balcony. On came the splendid show, the general bowing composedly, right and left. As he fronted the balcony, however, a quick smile of recognition brightened his face, and, with a bow of unusual deference, he passed them. Nora's eyes were shining with tears, happy tears, but she did not speak; while Mrs. Lasselle gazed triumphantly over to Mrs. Lyle, as much as to say, "Did you see that?" Secretly each of these vain women passed the compliment to her own account; but Nora said nothing. She was not one to parade her emotions: still she turned a pleased smile on her husband, who only whispered, "How glad he seemed to see you! I shouldn't wonder if that was really the pleasantest moment of the whole."

The din of trumpets, the sound of all the brass-throated instruments, gradually fell to the softest strain of an echo, as the great spectacle wound on to carry pleasure to other sight-seers. Soon the balcony was deserted. Harry had said that they two must be among the first to welcome the old general, and accordingly they wended their way to the parlor, where already many were assembled for the same purpose. They seated themselves on a lounge in the near vicinity of Mrs. Lasselle and her party, and where they could not avoid hearing the conversation.

"I am really very anxious for an introduction to the old hero," said Mrs. Lasselle, adjusting her bracelet; "Henry, I shall depend upon you to present me."

"Oh! yes—certainly—certainly," lisped the young man beside her, whose dangerous whisks and faultless curls were very often in close proximity to the fair lady's cheeks as he leaned down to address her. "I was once very inti-

mate with the general," he added; "he would do anything to give me pleasure, I assure you."

"Nora, do you remember him?" whispered Harry, with mischief in his eyes. "You ought to, for as he says he was very intimate."

"Oh! yes," and Nora smiled back, "he was Surgeon Rees' clerk. He does not recognize me, though I saw him more than once, when I was with uncle."

"Some women would have said Surgeon Rees' valet; for he was in reality that," replied Harry, "but you are altogether above and beyond some women. However, as he has had a fortune left him, we must let by-gones be by-gones, only it does annoy me to see fellows put on such airs."

There was an immense stir and bustle below stairs; then many steps heard approaching. The door opened, and the handsome face of the general appeared, backed by a crowd of men of note. The company rose as he bowed slightly, and moved forward, talking with his friends.

"Ah! excuse me," he cried, "here is my little Nora. I am so glad to see you, my darling. There, you must pardon me for kissing you before company, but I am an old-fashioned man, you know. Well, my pet," he had both her hands now, and was leading her to an unoccupied seat, she smiling and blushing, Harry following, Mrs. Lasselle gazing dumbly on, blue with wonder, "how do you like hotel life, and what do you find to occupy yourself with, both active brain and active fingers? I miss you more than I can tell, must have you back again. Ain't you ashamed of yourself, sir, taking my child away from me at my time of life, and bringing her to waste her precious time in a fashionable hotel?" he said, laughing, turning to Harry. "I'm afraid the good old habits my sister taught her are fast being merged into useless inactivity and purposeless labor."

"You never need fear for Nora, sir," said Harry; "she brought all the good old habits with her, and practices them as regularly as she does her music."

"Ah! she does, does she? Good child. Here comes Senator Glynn—my niece, Senator Glynn, my only sister's only child."

Mrs. Lasselle looked at Mrs. Lyle, and both were agast. This common little personage who did her own work was no other than niece to one of the first generals of the age. Was ever pride so extinguished? Was ever mortification so crushing? Certainly if Mrs. Lasselle had not entirely forfeited the esteem of Harry Moore's wife, she had done nothing to gain it; for, as she looked back, her coldness seemed insult. The young man by her side

appeared cowed on a sudden. He remembered the face of Nora now, and recollected also that she could not have forgotten him or his former station. He was spared the necessity of introducing the fair lady, however, for the snuffy Lasselle, himself fairly radiant with dust, his brow streaming with perspiration, and his white gloves dubiously colored somewhat to the shade of a dirty Meerschaum, entered, and, taking advantage of a leisure moment, almost dragged his reluctant wife to the general, and presented her. But the cordial hand pressure of the noble old man proved no balm to her, and she retired to her own room, angry with herself, and disgusted, for the time, with her surroundings.

Of course the whole house was in a state of intense excitement, and Nora found herself the recipient of attentions so new and numerous as

to appear rather questionable. However, the little lady—for true lady she was—gave offence to none, though she saw through artifice and stratagem; and when she left the A—— House, on an urgent invitation of her uncle to spend the summer at his country seat, she took leave of all alike, and extended her courtesies impartially.

Mrs. Lasselle and Mrs. Lyle had, however, both learned a lesson that was profitable for their future, and showed them the injustice of condemning on prejudice.

As for Nora, she is known to this day in the A—— House as the lady who did her own work, and husbands hold her up as a pattern when their wives complain of lassitude and *ennui*. I am happy to say that, in many respects, her rare example has been followed.

## COUSIN JANE'S CHILDREN.

BY BETSEY TROTWOOD.

I AM an old maid, a genuine and veritable spinster, having long ago outlived my twenty-fifth birthday.

Now old maids may be divided into two classes: old maids from necessity, and old maids from choice. The former class are much less numerous than is generally supposed. One rarely sees a woman who has not, at some time or other, had an opportunity to toll the knell of her own free moral agency, by tying herself up for better or worse, (and, in my opinion, the worse invariably predominates,) to some specimen of masculine humanity. I repeat that there are very few old maids from necessity, and I certainly do not belong to them.

Yet I was never a beauty. What with green eyes and mud-colored hair, it was always foretold that I should be an old maid; and then, from my earliest recollection up to the present time, I have always had the greatest antipathy to men and mice, and a proportionate partiality for cats and green tea.

Yet it was only yesterday that the situation of the late lamented Mrs. Deacon Jenkins was proffered me; a situation "fraught with numerous recommendations and advantages, mam," (I quote the words of the bereaved spouse,) though what their numerous recommendations and advantages are, I cannot for my life imagine, unless he referred to his ten children. But a contemplation of these suggest my story, from which I have been running away, I see.

My cousin Jane Smith had the misfortune to become attached, some years since, to a man. Him she subsequently married, and the consequence is, she has now a house full of children. I've forgotten just how many; I believe there are seven, but I used to think there must be seventeen from the uproar they contrived to make. You must know that I made Jane a visit a few weeks since, taking our dog, our cat, and a few band-boxes and bundles. To give my experiences in detail during those two weeks would be impossible. Such trials and tribulations! I'm sure if I hadn't been blessed with the disposition of an angel, it would have been completely ruined by those children.

Well, one day cousin Jane went away—went with my advice and consent, and I volunteered my labors in the home service. To tell the

truth, I was very glad of an opportunity of showing Jane how to manage these unruly juveniles, for, excellent woman that she was, she never, I thought, understood family government. Now I prided myself on being quite a disciplinarian, and it was with feelings of the greatest complacency that I watched the fluttering of my cousin's brown veil, as she disappeared in the distance. "Ah," thought I, "now will I show them how this family government may be reduced to system." I was in an angelic frame of mind, when I overheard James, aged twelve, exclaim, "I say, Kate, mother's gone, now won't we have a high old time? Here goes!" and I turned just in season to see the young scapegrace jump to the third shelf of the cupboard, and make a dive at the sugar-bowl; while Katie, two years younger, more quietly helped herself from a pot of preserves. As nearly as I can remember, I should think it occupied about four seconds of time for me to seize both those children, shake them into submission, and locate them in chairs at opposite corners of the room, with injunctions not to move hand or foot for fifteen minutes.

The other children, save the youngest, were at school, so I took my knitting and sat down, just a little flustered by my recent conflict. There was a dead silence, interrupted only by the clicking of my needle, for I had put a veto on all communication, by word or sign, between the two offenders. I sat there congratulating myself upon the admirable success of my theory carried into practice, when a cry from the cradle called me to its side. The baby had waked, and manifested a desire to be taken. Down went my knitting work, and up came the child; but upon noticing that its mother was not, and that I was, tending it, the infant immediately struck up such a screaming as I never heard, or dreamed of, before, or since. I coaxed and I petted—I sung, "Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber," to the tune of Greenville, and I sung everything else that I could think of, mixing up Mother Goose's Melodies and Isaac Watts in a manner anything but reverential to that divine—I rocked to and fro with astonishing violence—I searched for hidden pins fruitlessly—I related the bewitching anecdote of the three little kittens who lost their mittens, and I filled

up all the intervals with talking baby talk after the most approved style, murdering the queen's English in a manner to give Murray convulsions, and introducing innumerable words not laid down in Webster's unabridged—and still that child screamed—screamed until it was red, and screamed until it was hoarse, and screamed until I looked upon it in dumb amazement, that so small a body possessed such capabilities for screaming. "Auntie, it's fifteen minutes; may we go play?" chimed in Katie. "Yes, yes," said I, and they went.

Well now, what was to be done? I reflected. My theories didn't seem to work. Some new step must be taken, and that step I speedily decided upon. "Manifestly," reasoned I, "this depraved child has inherited from Adam a perverse temper, and a stubborn will." Had I ever had any disposition to question the doctrine of depravity, native and total, I am sure it would have been destroyed at that moment. I saw plainly then that it remained with me to subdue this rebellious will, and, as moral suasion had proved unavailing, of course something else must be tried. Acting upon this resolution, I then and there proceeded to inflict the proper punishment. I administered as much of this as I judged wise for an infant of that age, (the little Bessie, who, by-the-way, was christened for myself, was six months old,) but, to my everlasting consternation, that unaccountable child only yelled the more lustily. Instead of comprehending that I was punishing it for its own best good, and, therefore, stopping its cries, it redoubled them, until Bridget came rushing in with, "Och, mim, and I thought shure ye were killing the child." Need I say that I only too gladly resigned my precious namesake to Bridget, and left her administering saccharine consolation to the young angel, who, with its fingers in the sugar-bowl, was still as a mouse?

I rushed to my own room for a few minutes of rest, only to find confusion ten times worse confounded there. It seemed that Jim and Katie, on being dismissed from the nursery, had gone directly to my apartment, where they had been having their "high old time" in good

earnest. I declare it makes my hair stand on end to think of it. There sat Miss Kate, arrayed in my best hat and shawl, having emptied a bottle of choice perfumery upon my nicest handkerchief, and fanning herself with a face of the gravest sanctimony; while her brother was mounted upon an imaginary pulpit, represented by the bureau, and in my dressing-gown and spectacles, was reading a hymn in tones worthy of an auctioneer. "Playing meeting," briefly explained the juvenile orator, as I appeared, "let us sing, 'Come on my pardners in distress.' I'm Deacon Jenkins," and he nodded to me to take a seat and "not disturb the meeting;" then going on to imitate the drawl and twang of the old deacon, in a style which was perfectly execrating, and compelled me to laugh in spite of myself.

However, I found it necessary to break up their meeting in a very summary manner. The room was in a condition of unheard-of disorder, and an investigation revealed my King Charles under an ottoman; and my cat shut up in a drawer, with a napkin tied over her head. At this discovery I was perfectly wild, and I assure you that had it been possible to serve both those children measure for measure, by tying up their heads in napkins, and shutting them into separate closets, I should have done it. Indeed I was just upon the point of some such transaction, when I thought of my recent embarrassing failure in corporal punishment, and I desisted, just dismissing them with a severe lecture. Having exacted promises of future good behavior, I suggested to them the propriety of visiting their cousins next door. They went off in high glee, especially when I gave them permission to remain an indefinite period.

This was a specimen of the whole day. You may imagine how joyfully I welcomed my cousin Jane's returning figure, and how I rushed to my room, and, locking the door, read the last proclamation for Thanksgiving, to which I affixed a supplementary article, on my own private responsibility, expressing thanks that I, Betsey Trotwood, had been preserved from the all engulfing maelstrom of matrimony.

## LOOKING INTO THE GRATE.

BY MRS. C. V. DIX.

It was winter. I had made a roaring fire in the grate, and taken no little pleasure in doing so; for it was cold without, and I knew how the evening guests would rub their hands over it, and pronounce it "a glorious fire."

One of them, I knew, always liked to see the coals piled high; so, with the aid of the tongs, I contrived to make it just one coal higher, and that last coal must have contained a most unusual quantity of oxygen, for I was warmer, and felt my face glow even as I placed it there.

I always had a passion for looking into the grate. I love to see the little blue flames struggling upward, and to trace out figures between the bars, down in the heart of the fire. So I wheeled one end of the sofa round on to the rug, and, throwing myself down upon it, leaned back, and began to watch a little, old man, with a huge pack on his back, that seemed, with the assistance of his staff, to be climbing up a steep hill just above the second bar. I could not help saying to myself, or to my image rather, "Old man, what seek you?" and the wind whistled through the chimney, and I heard the old man say, "Fame, fame, yonder is the dome of the 'Temple of Fame.' Eighty years have I digged for gold, and here is my fortune," shrugging his shoulders till the huge pack trembled. "'Tis too big to go into my grave, they tell me, but it has grown to my back—I love it—ah! yes, I love it—they shall not tear it off—no, I will climb this hill, and at the sacred shrine in yonder temple I will offer it, that they may enroll my name on the great book. Then shall I live, live like other gods, and posterity shall know me."

A door shut, a coal fell from the grate, and the old man was no more. But oh! what a bright spot he left between the grate bars. I covered my eyes for a minute, and, when I looked again, the bright, almost white coals

far within had taken the form of three little children as though at play on the floor. How I painted them up, in my fancy, with merry blue eyes, and dangling light curls!

I bent forward to look at it; still it was the same. Then I threw my head back again, and closed my eyes to see if I had it on the walls of my memory. It was there: hanging, too, in just the right place. Now I never could enter my gallery without seeing it. "What a pretty picture!" I exclaimed, aloud.

I loved pictures, and I loved to try to paint them—but oh! how my clumsy pencil and brush always mocked my ideals. Once more though I was ready to try. "If that old landscape is ever completed," I thought, this scene shall be copied on canvas. "Three little children at play on the floor." Every one will think it beautiful if I can only paint it as I see it. I wonder if any one will like it better that it is all my own design? Still the same, but it must soon vanish, thought I, like my old man; so I will make my last study. While I was making that study, two heavy hands were laid upon my head.

I felt them, I knew they were there—yes, and I knew whose hands they were, but it did not startle me. I must have been more excited with my picture than I was aware of.

Then Arthur had closed that door, the jar of which had annihilated my old man, and thus revealed my prettier picture. But I did not think of that. It did not once occur to me how, or when he had entered. He was there—his hands were cooling my heated head, and I was quietly, but perfectly happy.

"What are you doing?" said he, at length, for I had neither moved nor spoken.

"Looking into the grate."

"Was it in the grate that you saw that pretty picture that I heard you speaking of just now?"

"Did you hear me speaking of it?"

"Yes, tell me all about it, won't you?"

"Not now," said I, flushing with delight as I thought of the picture I would show him some day.

"I will await your time," he answered, as he came round and sat down beside me, close beside me. He smoothed the hair down upon my forehead as he talked so kindly, so brotherly. He laid his hand upon my shoulder, then drew me nearer to him. He called me "sister." That was a pet name he had recently given me, how I loved it! It never had seemed so richly good to me as it did now, with my head resting upon his shoulder, and his arm thrown so brotherly around me. Yet now it was that he told me I could be his *sister* no more. He knew, he saw that it did not grieve me, but he could not know with what "a feeling of shelter and infinite rest" I hid upon his bosom, when he had kissed me, and called me by a dearer name.

I was twenty years old. Ten years before my good father had finished earth's lesson, and left us for that city that hath no grave-yards.

How strangely Arthur's face against mine reminded me of him! Yes, father, your little Ellen thought of you that night, for bearded lips had never pressed hers since the day you embarked upon that fated ship.

Another story will tell why I have told this.

Everything, needful to health and comfort in a nursery, surrounds a mother, who, with her sleeping babe in her arms, sits "looking into the grate." A noble browed boy, and beautiful girl are at play on the floor beside her. So near of an age are they, that now, in their little white night-gowns, you might take them for twins. We'll see what they are doing, for their mother does not. Ah! Jimmie has declared his superiority in years, and is endeavoring to demonstrate it to Nellie, by comparing his tiny boot with her tinier shoe.

Were their mother not lost in the grate, she could interpret all their prattle: all we can understand is, "See, I am so much older than you are."

The door opens, and one, whom both nature and culture have given "the grand old name of gentleman," enters. The children have not heard him, and no one knows he is there, till, going behind his wife's chair, he places his hands upon her head.

I felt them—I knew they were there—but it did not startle me, for I knew they were my husband's hands, and, reader, you know they were Arthur's.

"Looking into the grate?" said he.

"Yes, Arthur, just as I was——" But ere I could finish, I was clasped to my old resting-place. I forgave its father, though he had awakened my babe.

"Do you ever find in *our* grate such 'pretty pictures' as the one you were looking at *that* night?"

"Never, Arthur, I always see the old one."

The resolution that had kept my pet secret from him all those years was broken, though it was upon the very eve of his birthday; the time so joyfully looked forward to ever since baby's birth.

I believe I have never broken one resolution that I made on that night—the night of our engagement. I finished the old landscape, sketched my grate picture, and commenced my work. How I toiled on that picture, thinking to have it completed for Arthur's wedding gift! He never knew it, but I really believe that I left my work reluctantly sometimes even at his call. Well I remember, Arthur's asking me, one summer evening, what made me so unusually happy, and my telling him that he should know some day. Ah! had I not a right to be happy? That day I had finished one of my group, and its little face had smiled upon me. But when morning came it did not suit me, and I spent the whole day in undoing the work of a month.

Not long after our marriage, business called my husband away for several weeks. Perhaps I bore that first separation better than he, for my whole time was devoted to my group. Still their faces were not true to my mind's picture, and again my work was destroyed.

One day, soon after baby was born, as Jimmie and Nellie were playing with me, I saw that their faces were beautiful, and a new idea seized me. I made another resolve. My picture should be finished and given to Arthur on his next birthday. It was done. It had been framed, and hung in the parlor on the very night of which I have spoken, when my husband's hands upon my head aroused me from looking into the grate—his birthday eve.

I could not wait till morning. Baby could just sit alone. I put her down between her brother and sister, and they laughed merrily to see her clinch the toys they gave her in her little, fat fists, and then throw them away. "Arthur," said I, and I am sure I never spoke so proudly, "which is the prettiest?" He kissed them all, and would not say. I doubt if he could. Then I took him away, and asked him to go down to the parlor with me. He followed, regarding my excited manner with no little curiosity.



"Now, dear Ellen, what is it?" said he, after he had lighted both chandeliers at my request.

"Only a birthday gift," I tried to say, very calmly. "Come and let me see if you recognize it."

One start of surprise, and then he seemed to comprehend it all, and looked at it long, and silently, till, I think, he could not see it, for he

wound his arms about me and we wept together. We had no *griefs* in those days: but some times our cup of joy would run over.

He had "awaited my time." Then it was that he knew what I had seen when "looking into the grate." Yes, that was the group, but their faces were the faces of his children and mine.

## M O N E Y .

BY MARY E. CLARKE.

"So you think young Holmes really loves you?"

"Uncle!"

"That look of surprised indignation is quite superfluous, my dear child. I am aware of the fact that Atherton Holmes has been your most devoted cavalier for several months, and has finally made you a proposal of marriage; at the same time—pardon me—I doubt his love. He is too worldly, too selfish, to suit such a nature as yours. I wish——"

"Well, uncle, what do you wish?"

"I wish you would postpone your wedding for a few months. You are not in any hurry to leave me?"

"No, no, a thousand times no. I will postpone the wedding; but—but, uncle, I think you misjudge Atherton."

"Well, well, child, I am satisfied if you are happy. I have had too much trouble myself to wish to cross young people in their love."

The speakers were Mr. Lawrence Colton, and his niece, Catharine Lewis; and, in order to introduce you properly to my heroine, I must go back in my story.

Mr. Lewis, Catharine's father, was a man of large wealth, and this was his only child. The pet of both parents, her life, until she was seventeen years old, was one of unbroken sunshine. But at that time, her mother died, when her father, marrying again, and to one uncongenial to our heroine, the latter went to live with Mr. Colton, who declared his intention of leaving her his large fortune. Her year of mourning over, her uncle insisted upon opening his house, and introducing Kate into society as his heiress. She came out, in her nineteenth year, a beauty, an understood heiress, and a novelty, for Mrs. Lewis, herself averse to society, had never introduced Kate into it.

Of course suitors were plenty. With a tall, full figure, perfect features, and the rare contrast of black hair and eyes, with a pure red and white complexion, Kate Lewis was not one to pass unnoticed in society, and her reported heiress-ship did not detract from her charms. Among those who admired this brilliantly beautiful girl, was a young physician, for whom Kate entertained the greatest respect, and who

had her warm, sincere friendship. She did not know why Frank Lee was such a pet of her uncle's, but she met him at home constantly. It was an old love story; and when the son of her who had been the love of Mr. Colton's youth, came to him poor, orphaned, friendless, he had but obeyed the dictates of a warm, generous nature, in educating and providing for him. Kate knew nothing of this; she only knew that Dr. Lee was a pet of her uncle's and her dear mother's; she liked him in a frank, sisterly way, but she never imagined that beneath the quiet, brotherly manner he always extended toward her, the young man hid a fierce, hot love, all the more violent that a sense of honor kept it concealed.

Frank Lee was proud. He had obeyed his mother's last wish when he came to Lawrence Colton after her death, and the warm, loving tenderness of his guardian made the sense of obligation sweet, not painful. He had studied hard, had passed with high honors through the medical college, and knew that his ardent love for his profession, and the high stand he was gradually reaching in his practice, more than repaid his benefactor for the first outlay. But to woo Mr. Colton's heiress, to take advantage of his freely offered hospitality to steal away the love that was the old man's life, was repugnant to the young man's high sense of honor, and he loved silently unsuspected.

Atherton Holmes, the gentleman whose splendid talents had won Kate's consent, when he asked her to be his wife, was a man selfish, but capable of concealing his selfishness, talented, and intellectual enough to completely dazzle a young, fresh heart like Kate's, and take her fancy captive. She believed sincerely his protestations of never-dying love, she fancied she returned it, but the uncle read the young heart better than she did herself.

Had Frank Lee guessed how near to Mr. Colton's heart lay the hope that his niece would, one day, marry this son of his adoption, he need not have schooled his heart to such stern silence; but he did not suspect it. He saw the flush, which had left Kate's cheek since her mother's death, come back in Atherton's presence; he noted the full, joyous tones of her

voice when she sang with her betrothed; he marked the light, buoyant step which hastened to meet his rival, and he proudly smothered his own grief, and returned the cordial, frank greeting Kate always gave him, with the same gentle courtesy which he had ever extended to her.

And now that you are acquainted, reader, with my heroine, I will take you back to the cosy sitting-room, in which the conversation which opens my story, was held. The group there consisted of Mr. Colton, Mrs. Kneass, a lady who superintended his household affairs, and did interminable pieces of crochet work in the sitting-room in the evenings, and Frank Lee, whose curly head is resting on the arm of Mr. Colton's chair, his large, soft, blue eyes fixed on the fire, and his hand clasped fast in that of his old friend. With his first love thrown back upon his heart, Frank had filled partially the craving for love, by becoming almost girlish in his demonstrations of affection toward Mr. Colton. Now seated on a low stool at the old man's feet, he was slowly caressing the withered hand, his eyes fixed on the grate fire, his thoughts far away. The door which leads from the sitting-room to the parlor stands open, and the rich, full notes of a woman's voice, accompanied by the tones of the grand piano, came from the other room. Kate sang well. Feeling music in the inmost depths of her nature, she could pour forth the full tones of a rich contralto voice with passionate expression; and Frank, in his dreamy reverie, felt his whole soul spring to a new trembling life, as the glorious voice fell, charged with the energy of a German love song, upon his ear. A deep, heavy sigh escaped him unconsciously.

Some long silent memory in Mr. Colton's heart was stirred too by this glorious young voice, and the sigh, coming upon these memories, was a revelation to the old man. He looked up. Mrs. Kneass, far away at the other end of the room, nodded over the crochet work. Atherton was beside Kate; the young man and his old friend were, to all intents and purposes, alone. Still his voice was low, and he bent forward till his white hair mingled with Frank's brown curls before he spoke; then he said,

"Frank, you love Kate."

Frank did not start. The words chimed well with the thoughts in his heart. He only said,

"Yes; but she does not dream of it."

"Frank." The old man's voice, though low, was full and deep. "If—remember, I say—if she ever needs a friend, remember I charge you to be that friend."

"She will not need me," said the young man, sadly. "Loving and loved, she will not need a friend when she is Atherton's wife."

But the old man only repeated,

"Remember, I charge you to be that friend!"

Kate at that instant finished her song, and came, with Atherton, into the room. They were a handsome couple. His tall, erect figure matched hers well; and the dark eyes were full of tenderness as they rested on her face. She looked radiantly beautiful; the excitement of singing had given a rich crimson glow to her cheek; and her eyes were full of fire and brilliancy.

Without any of that blushing embarrassment which love, real love would have given her, she welcomed Frank, whom she had not seen before, and drew her chair up beside her uncle's, as if, Atherton inwardly observed, "I was her grandfather."

Three little weeks later, how changed was the scene in the sitting-room! Mr. Colton, seized with the same sudden disease which had carried Kate's mother to the grave, died a week after the night when he penetrated Frank's secret. Frank, carrying out a long silent wish, was away at the time, making a visit to Niagara, to be away on Kate's wedding day. A terrible discovery came with Mr. Colton's death; instead of leaving large wealth, it was found that he had been living, for several years past, not on his income, but on his capital, and it was all spent; there was nothing, literally nothing for Kate. In her first grief, Kate had naturally turned to Atherton for comfort, and found his soothing tenderness inexpressibly dear to her; but, when the state of her uncle's affairs was told her, her first thought, dictated by a high sense of honor, prompted her to offer to release Mr. Holmes from his engagement. She wrote to him, looking upon the note, in her secret heart, a mere form. To her surprise, a polite, chilling answer was returned. Mr. Holmes, since he could escape the odium of himself proposing this measure, accepted Miss Lewis's offer to release him from the engagement.

It would be impossible to describe the sudden revulsion of feeling in Kate's heart. She knew now that she had never given her whole love to her betrothed; and the expression of withering contempt which came upon her lip, as she read the note, would have shamed even Atherton could he have seen it. The note, however, was the last burden laid upon a heart already overlaid with grief and anxiety, and Kate's physical health gave way under the accumulation of mental trouble. Frank, on his return, found

Mrs. Kneass mourning over his benefactor's death, and Miss Kate's illness.

She was not sick many days, but they were long enough to make her feel, with a strange, deep, pleasure, the kind care of her uncle's ward. The respectful tenderness with which he treated her; the unremitting professional care he gave her; the gentle, heartfelt sympathy he showed in her grief were new, and her poor, tired heart rested with a sense of comfort upon the love of her friend, her brother, as she fondly called him.

As soon as she was well enough to go out again, she applied for the place of governess in a family with whom she had been on visiting terms, and her services were gladly secured. She did not tell Frank of this step until it was irrevocable. The family were to leave for Europe in a few days, and when made aware of the certainty that, for a time at least, he must lose his idol, Frank's long silent love could be concealed no longer. He told her all, concluding with—

"Kate, I know that your heart is not mine yet; I do not ask you now to return my love, but let me hope. Wherever you are, write to me only one word, 'Come,' and I will hasten to you. You will let me be your friend and brother, until I may fill a nearer place, will you not, Kate?"

Trembling with the excitement of a new joy; not daring to trust her own heart yet after its recent mistake; scorning to add to his worldly cares by coming to him, penniless, mourning, and, her heart whispered, rejected by another, Kate only replied by words of friendship; yet when the earnest pleading rose to impassioned eloquence, she did whisper the word he longed for—"Hope."

Three years later. A group of gentlemen were assembled upon the porch of one of the hotels at Saratoga, when a gentleman and two ladies rode up on horseback. The foremost, who came cantering gayly up to the porch, was a pretty blonde, in a blue habit and white hat, by name Minnie Hayes; following her more slowly came, side by side, an elderly gentleman, and a tall

lady in a black habit and hat. Heavy braids of black hair resting on her cheek, and a pair of large, dreamy black eyes, made the pallor of her face positively startling. Yet pale and sad, she was lovely still, and many comments were made upon her looks as she rode slowly up to the steps.

One of the gentlemen, a new arrival, pressed slightly forward as he saw her face.

"You are admiring Miss Lewis, doctor," said one of the gentlemen standing near him. "Don't lose your heart, she is only a governess of Miss Hayes's. They returned from Europe last week, and came directly here. Miss Lewis had scarcely arrived, when she changed her dress from a light to a deep mourning, and refused to come into the ball-room. I suppose she is some relation to the rich Lewis who died about two months ago."

At this moment Kate raised her eyes to the porch, and they rested first on the face she had longed for three years to see. She bowed, and a faint color rose to her cheek. Frank bounded down the steps to meet her, but before he had walked from the porch steps to those where the party dismounted, Kate had gone into the house. A few moments later, the waiter put a card into his hand—one word only was penciled on it. Come.

He followed the man to the private parlor engaged by Mr. Hayes, and there alone, still in her riding-dress, stood Kate.

Not many words came at first, but when the first joy of meeting was over, Kate said,

"I am so glad, Frank, so glad that I waited. I do not come to you now, as I should have done three years ago. My father's recent death, as he left no will, puts me in possession of more money than I ever expected my uncle would leave, and, if you take me, you must take my property."

Atherton Holmes always winced when the beautiful Mrs. Lee was spoken of in his presence, her romantic story alluded to, and especially when the narrator added,

"And, after all, though Mr. Colton left nothing, she was an heiress, for she inherited all her father's money."

## MY TEACHER.

BY JULIA EUGENIA MOTT.

It matters not how the following chapter in the life of Agnes Crafts came into my hands. Here it is, in her own words, and, while I give you them, I wish that I could also show you the delicacy and firmness of the chirography, which forms such a striking contrast to her old, dashing, irregular writing. You would hardly think it possible that both came from the same hand. Agnes, the girl, and Agnes, the woman, are just as different.

He was my teacher. You are right in pitying him, for I was no better than the majority of scholars. Not that I was very disobedient, nor idle, but I was a school girl, and you understand what that term comprehends quite as well as I can tell you. If there is any being more mischievous than a school boy, it is his counterpart of the other sex. I attended a large boarding-school, where the pupils were divided into as many different cliques as the inhabitants of any aspiring country town, which has just succeeded to the dignity of an incorporation. Wealth is the universal alchemist which can transmute the base alloy of social inferiority into the pure gold of upper tendom, but we were not learned in its value then, and our distinctions were founded rather upon a similarity of the predominant inclinations than anything else; and I think that this is the reason why school-girl intimacies are so transient. A general agreement of thoughts and habits is not considered, and when the union of interests is broken by separation, the tenderness which has passed for friendship proves evanescent as it was bright.

When I entered school, I took my place, very naturally, in the circle known as "The Mischief Club." There were eight or ten members, and just so surely as any mischief was perpetrated, we were called upon for an explanation; sometimes when we were not guilty, but little we cared for that; if innocent, one might make a shrewd guess that it was rather from accident than design. Our principal was very lenient. We gave him no serious trouble, and he was wise enough to feel certain that, although coercion might teach us the appearance of docility, another lesson, that of deceit, would be its inevitable concomitant. So he took care that we

did not overleap the wide bounds he set for us; but within, left us to our own wayward propensities, of which the worst that could be said was, that they were mischievous.

Our teacher in mathematics, during the term previous to the one with which I commence this veritable history, was an old curmudgeon, (as some of the scholars were wont to call him very irreverently, taking care, however, that he was not within ear shot,) fast verging upon forty. Mr. Harney was not a very fascinating specimen of the *genus homo*, and if happiness has a beautifying effect, I am inclined to the opinion that he had never had his share of it, for I cannot well conceive how he could have been uglier. His tall, gaunt figure; his rough shock of sandy, unkempt hair; the keen, cold, gray eyes looking out from under his shaggy eyebrows with a glance not particularly edifying to unruly pupils, were all enormities which we could neither forgive nor forget.

In addition to them he wore large boots, and tramped across the room during recitations, making noise enough to deafen one. Strictly speaking, it can hardly be considered a crime to wear large boots when the feet will not admit of smaller ones; "But what business had he with large feet?" we asked, indignantly; and if his feet were large, and he could not help himself, "What business had he to come here and torture our sensitive nerves by his horrid tramping?" Influenced by these, and like cogent reasons, we tried and condemned him without judge or jury. I verily believe that he would have cowed a class of boys into obedience; but as it happens, in many contests, that victory is due rather to the weakness of the vanquished, than the strength of the conqueror: so it was in this. Mr. Harney had not the ability to conceal that he was half in fear of us; nor were we slow in taking advantage of the revelation. Superiority of position did not bring magnanimity. We gave the poor man some deeper experience of this "vale of tears" than he had ever known before. I shall not enter into any particulars. My young sisters do not need to have any more mischief put into their heads. What is inherent there will be quite sufficient for all needful purposes. Mr. Harney

did not teach another term. He went off in search, as I suppose, of some clime "where school girls never come." I hope he found it. I should be sorry to know that the "winged winds," or any other of the elements were so cruel as to answer, "None," in response to his piteous inquiry, as to the existence of such a place. We all joined heartily in wishing him *un bon voyage*; and Annie Pace wrote a eulogy upon his many virtues.

It was with a great show of valor, and some concealed trepidation, that we entered the recitation room, on the first Monday morning of the ensuing term. The professor's chair was already occupied. Mr. Graham was the very antipodes of his predecessor. A slender, well-formed man, with dark hair, slightly inclined to curl; a high, broad forehead; hazel eyes, calm and clear; a mouth delicate, but firm, the upper lip shaded by a moustache, he sat unmoved by any fear of the "irrepressible conflict" which we saw in the future. Opening his class-book, he called each name separately, looking up, as the answers came, with a steady glance, which precluded the suspicion of forgetfulness. More than one received the uncomfortable assurance, that she had not another Mr. Harney to deal with, while that grave eye searched her face. The first recitation—in algebra—passed off quietly enough. The lesson was well learned, and equally well recited. I cannot answer for Mr. Graham's impressions of his class. If he flattered himself that the morning's quiet was a prophecy for the future, he had yet to learn that the stability of his empire depended upon his own firmness of purpose; not upon the loyalty of his pupils, for such rebels are not to be subdued in a day. Already mutinous whispers were rife. After school hours were over, we all assembled for consultation, each feeling that our only strength was in concerted action. Single-handed we could do nothing.

There was no lack of speakers, in fact we had rather too many of them; three or four talking at the same moment, tended rather to confuse than otherwise. Our president looked on with commendable patience. She never liked to have her injunctions disregarded, and wisely refrained from issuing any, when the probability of such a result was as strong as in the present instance; comforting herself with the assurance, that whatever we lacked in prudence, was made up in fervor.

When we separated, nothing definite had been determined upon. We were all agreed, however, in thinking the new teacher worse than the old.

Mr. Harney had rough points sticking out in all directions, like so many porcupine quills, of which we could take hold. What if they did prick us sometimes? we obtained the final victory, and our scars were honorable ones. In Mr. Graham we could find nothing to condemn. He was gentlemanly in appearance and demeanor, destitute of any yet discovered peculiarities, without pretence or affectation, and, what was more provoking than all else, after that first searching glance, he troubled himself no more about his class than if they had been so many automatons, who could just recite a lesson and no more. Was not all this enough to make us, who were predetermined to dislike him, almost despair? Of course the trifling circumstance, that we had no reason for it, could not prevent us from carrying out our laudable intention.

The next morning some mutinous demonstrations commenced, which were promptly checked by Mr. Graham's quiet address. So the days passed on; the teacher holding his own by virtue of constant watchfulness, the scholars no less rebellious in heart, but acknowledging to themselves, their inability to cope successfully with a commander whose generalship was so admirable. He never obtruded his authority. The fact, that he was ruler in the recitation room, was one, which, once known, was indisputable for ever after, and why should he exert his power unnecessarily? Though its influence was silent, it was no less sure. All felt it, but none dared openly brave his displeasure. Something in the man's eye, calm, and even grave as it was, spoke of a latent force, which it would be dangerous to arouse.

For myself, I thought I had never so disliked a teacher; certainly I had never been so unhappy in any class. Scarcely a day passed, that some mischievousness of mine did not bring upon me the steady, rebuking gaze, which was worse than a dozen ordinary reproofs. It made me miserable, ashamed of myself, discontented with all the world beside, longing for something better than I had ever known; this was the mood in which I usually left the recitation room. As likely as not, before I reached my own apartment, it had changed into one of unmitigated rebellion against him, my teacher.

"I hate him," I said, on one such occasion, "he humiliates me, what right has he to crush me with the sense of my own unworthiness? How dare he assert his own superiority in that calm way as if it were beyond all question." I threw my algebra upon the table with passionate vehemence; it struck the inkstand and

sent it off upon the carpet. Ashamed of my weakness, I went humbly to washing out the black stains, feeling withal an uncomfortable impression, that the ink-spot was not the only blot, which that morning's passion had left as a memento, and alas! the other might not be so easily effaced. Then I sat down upon the side of the bed, thinking gloomily how miserable I was, and must be, so long as Mr. Graham was my teacher. What did I care whether he approved my actions or not? I asked. My unsubdued rebelliousness was quick to answer; it does not concern you, let him think as he will; nevertheless it *did* concern me, whether I forfeited the esteem of one whose regard was valuable as is that of any good man or woman.

My struggles always ended in a new declaration of independence; right was not strong enough to obtain a complete victory. Each morning found me in my class resolved to be myself again, but it was not so easy to execute as to resolve. My mischievousness was not subdued, but every feeling of rebellion was stilled while I remained in his presence. There he controlled me; his will was stronger than mine, but, however humbly I passed out when the recitation was concluded, it was only to experience, each day, a similar struggle between my increasing desire for his esteem, and the unfounded prejudice which I had cherished against one, the head and front of whose offending was found in the simple fact, that he was my teacher.

The ringleaders of our "Mischief Club" had, by this time, become tolerably well assured that the rod of empire had passed from their hands forever. They saw the handwriting upon the wall, yet they did not quite despair. "The prophecy *might* prove untrue," they said, in their doleful consultations; the end and aim of which was to discover some means of retrieving their late disgraceful defeats. Mr. Graham did not relax his vigilance. However quiet all seemed, he knew that, at any moment, the rebellion, quelled but not extinguished, might break out again. Of all the rebels none was more daring than Annie Pace; a slender brunette, intelligent, pretty, graceful, and winning; even amid all her mischief, it is a wonder to me now, how any man could have refrained from laying down his arms before her. In calmer moods, her eyes had the steady brightness of stars, but merri-ment overflowed in them first, then they danced, and sparkled, and flashed, as I am morally certain no other pair of eyes ever had, or could do since the world came into existence. Mr. Graham remained unmoved. His "Miss Annie"

was just as grave as his "Miss Helen," or "Miss Grace." His reproving look was in no degree modified, when her conduct called for it. If ever any teacher was totally oblivious to the fact, that his scholars were girls, young, and some of them pretty, that one was Ralph Graham. I challenge all competition with him in this respect.

One day, Annie wrote a parody upon a popular song, making our teacher the subject. It was as laughter-provoking as anything ever written: but so far as the justice of it was concerned there was none. That mattered little, however. Justice was a commodity in which, as you have surmised before this, we dealt as sparingly as possible; and Annie received her full share of applause from the select audience to whom she first read it; an audience, by-the-by, consisting of her room-mate, who, like Major Gahagan, might have reckoned herself as a thousand, when any mischief was on foot. The rest of us had heard exaggerated reports of its merit, and were all on the *qui vive*, but no opportunity occurred for its perusal, until we met for recitation the next morning. Mr. Graham was late, a very unusual circumstance with him, and we availed ourselves of the interval to become fully acquainted with its merits. At last he entered, looking rather pale and worn. I had the paper in my hand, when I heard his step upon the stairs, and, folding it hastily, slipped it into my algebra for safe keeping, until I could find an opportunity to return it to its author. I sat at the end of the class most distant from the teacher; and during the recitation he came around to see my problem, which stood upon the board ready for explanation. Some alteration was required, and, while making it, I inadvertently dropped the paper from between the leaves of my book. It lay for some moments unnoticed, until Mr. Graham picked it up and opened it to see to whom it belonged. He understood it instantly; his face flushed, and his lips were set hard together. For once the whole class was frightened. Nothing was said, however; he laid the offending poem upon his desk, and went on with the recitation as usual. We were all uneasy and ashamed. Never sound of bell was so welcome as the one which freed us from the grave scrutiny of his eyes. I was the last to pass his chair. He stopped me, and extended the paper.

"This fell from your book, I believe," he said, very gravely, "I had not expected it from you, Agnes." The slight emphasis upon the "you" gave me a keen pleasure, quickly swallowed up in the deeper realization of his dis-

pleasure. He thought I was the author of the parody. The mistake was a natural one; my writing was enough like Annie Pace's to deceive those familiar with both: besides, I had it in my book. I went to my room with a new load of humiliation added to that which I had already found so hard to bear; and bitterer than all was the certainty, that I might have had a different experience had I so chosen. I had willfully thrown away his esteem. Looking up at him from the depths of my own self-abasement, his virtues were magnified infinitely. In him I saw nothing to condemn; in myself nothing worthy of commendation.

All my rebellion was crushed out forever. I contrasted his patience, his gentle firmness, above all his justice, with the opposite qualities which I saw in myself. How unworthy I was, how blind I had been! I wondered at my own conduct; I heaped reproaches, bitter and unsparing, upon myself, finding a strange satisfaction in the punishment, which I could not have borne from any other. He was wise, and strong, and good, and I might have been. I felt the power within me. So it came to pass that I rose from my self-communing with better impulses stirring in my heart, than had been there for months. I had resolutely shut them out before, now I welcomed them. "I will be womanly and thoughtful," I said to myself, "I will show him that there is something better in me than he has yet seen. I will at least regain my own self-approval, if his esteem is forfeited beyond redemption." I did not see what injustice I did his character in this momentary fear, that change of conduct would not bring forgetfulness of the past. But exaggerating my own fault as I did, it seemed natural and just that I should lose his regard forever.

How eagerly I waited for the next recitation! I went to it tremblingly. Mr. Graham's manner was the same, with an added shade of coldness. There was no new assumption of dignity. That which was innate could not be disturbed by the ridicule of school-girls. His demeanor did not tend to lessen the immeasurable height to which he had risen in my estimation, nor was it any more efficacious in restoring my own self-complacency. I went from the class with a feeling of deeper humility than I entered it. The next day it was the same, and the next, and the next. So it went on for a week, until I could bear it no longer. I came to a desperate resolution; I would go to him; I would humble myself to the confession of my error; I would learn whether his esteem was lost. The thought

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that it might be, made it incomparably valuable to me.

One day I had passed his chair, and I suppose he thought I had gone down stairs with the others, but instead, I lingered in the recitation room. He leaned his head upon his hand with a sigh of weariness or dejection. The sound cut me to the heart. No reproach could have been half so bitter in my repentant mood, as the thought that I might have caused it by my perverseness. I retraced my steps.

"Mr. Graham."

He raised his head, the sad look not fading from his face for an instant, but his voice was unchanged from its usual grave tones.

"What is it, Agnes?"

My errand was a difficult one, but I was resolved.

"I'm sorry that I have given you such cause to be displeased with me," I said, very humbly.

He looked at me with a somewhat softened glance.

"Is it anything to you whether I am displeased or not, Agnes?"

The sorrowful modulation of his voice affected me strangely.

"Indeed it is," I replied, with a burst of tears.

"I know that you have had no reason to think so hitherto, but try me now." I bent my head upon my hands, weeping unrestrainedly.

"The past is all past, Agnes," he was saying, kindly; "only be what you are capable of showing yourself, and I can ask nothing more."

I lifted my face from my hands. "Of one thing, which you attribute to me, I am innocent. That parody, Mr. Graham, I cannot tell you who the author is: but I am not."

"I am glad of it," he replied; "but even if it had been yours, as I thought, the past should have been past just the same. I think I have more faith in you, than you have in yourself; I do not believe you know of how much good you are capable, but you will learn some day."

"You have taught me to long for something better than I have known, or been," I answered, hurriedly, not weighing my words, but speaking from the depths of my contrition.

"Do you know why?"

I was painfully conscious, that I crimsoned at the question, but if he had asked me the reason, I could have answered the one inquiry as readily as the other. I managed to stammer, "No."

He drew away the hands in which my face had again found refuge, compelling me to meet his eyes.

"It is because I love you; do you hear? I



love you; and thus loving, I see in you not so much what you are, as what you may become. Will you learn with me how glorious a true life is? I am but a beginner, also, Agnes."

He relinquished my hands; the room swam around me; everything became unreal, save the one figure, as he stood awaiting my answer. All else was uncertain; with him alone was safety, and strength, and peace.

I lifted my tearful eyes to his, putting my two hands within his own. "Will you teach me,

Mr. Graham?" This was my answer; but he thought it enough.

Ralph is leaning over my shoulder as I write. He says: "Add, Agnes, that the pupil has outstripped her master. It is I who should learn of you." I put my hand over the mouth which would say more cruel words, thinking with tears springing from a strange blending of gladness and humility upon the face to which Ralph bends his, "that he still sees in me, not what I am, but what he would have me be."

## NOTHING TO LIVE FOR.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

IN one short month, the work of bereavement was completed, and three babes went up to heaven through the gates of death; three babes in their beauty and innocence. From that sad hour, when the last life-light faded from mortal eyes, and the last marble form lay cold and still in the slumber that is never broken, the mother's heart lost interest in everything.

"I have nothing to live for now," was its language; and so, shrouding her chamber in funeral gloom, she sat down there, living among graves.

"I do not think," said a friend, who wished to arouse her from the mental stupor into which she had fallen, "that you really loved your children."

The words struck her like blows, arousing, and agitating her profoundly. The allegation was thrown back with indignant lips.

"If you loved them," was soberly replied, "you would have joy in their translation."

"I cannot hear such language!" said the mother. "It is a cruel outrage upon my feelings. Do you come to hurt and bruise me?"

"No; but to speak words of truth in your ears. What I have said, I repeat. If you really loved your children, you would have joy in their translation. Instead of sitting here in darkness, you would come out into the light, and thank God for His goodness in taking them into the company of angels. It is for yourself that you are sorrowing; not for them. You are mourning over your own loss, instead of rejoicing at their great gain."

"Cruel! cruel! cruel!" sobbed the mother, burying her face in her hands, and weeping violently.

The friend sat calmly, until the tempest of passion had died away; then rising, she said,

"You will remember my words. They are true."

And she turned away coldly, as one that is offended, and passed from the gloomy chamber.

The mother was greatly disturbed by this visit. No one, before, had ventured to speak in words of reproof and accusation. All had been said in low whispers of intrusive consolation, that passed her dull ears as the idle wind passes a shut casement.

"Sitting in darkness still!" said this friend, entering the chamber of sorrow a week or two later. "Come, come, my sister; this will never do! Let in the light! God's blessed sunshine is abroad."

But the mourner shook her head sadly.

"There is no more light in this world for me."

"There is light for you and for every one. I tell you that the sun is shining."

"Not for me. My sun has gone down. My work is done. I am waiting for my appointed time."

"Your work done!" The idea was rejected with something like scorn.

"What have I to live for? My children are dead; and I am all alone in the world!" The mourner spoke in a tone of rebuke.

"Alone in the world! Nothing to live for!" Voice, look, and manner, all expressed astonishment.

"What have I to live for?" was demanded.

"First, and foremost, to live for heaven," said the visitor.

"Are you my judge?"

"No; judgment is with Him who knoweth all hearts."

"But you sit in judgment."

"That no mortal can do. As your Book of Life is, so will be your judgment, when the book is opened. And who writes in this book? Not God; nor an angel; but you alone. Every day and every hour your hand is making a record. You have been writing in it steadily, morning, noon, and night, during the past three months in which you have been sitting here, idle in all save this—sitting in the shadow of your grief. How will this writing appear, when the book of your life is opened, in the presence of God and the angels? Will it bear a history of good deeds, of loving ministrations? Remember, that even the cup of cold water has its reward; and also remember, that the servant who hid his one talent in the earth, instead of gaining by its use other talents, was cast into the outer darkness. I speak plainly, my friend, because infinite and eternal things are involved in all the circumstances of our lives. We cannot sit down, folding our hands in sad inaction, saying that we

have nothing to live for, and be blameless before God. He will not accept this record in the book of our lives in place of a record of good deeds done to his children."

The mourner, restless and impatient a little while before, now sat very still. This daily writing in her book of life was a new thought to her; a new and startling thought. If this were indeed true, what of the judgment when it was opened in her last day?

"Your work done? Nothing to live for?" continued the visitor, as she saw that her words had found a lodgment. "My dear friend! God says to you now, as he has been saying to you every day that you have been idly sorrowing in this chamber of grief, 'The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few.' The life of heaven is not a life of useless repining, but of action and good deeds. Your children are in heaven. If you would meet them there, you must arise and move onward in the way to heaven."

"What can I do?" There was a hopeless, almost despairing look in the mother's face. "What can I do?" she repeated.

"If there is a willing heart, God will see that the hands are not idle for lack of work," was answered. "He has motherless children, as well as childless mothers to care for. If there is mother-love in your heart, let it have free course in blessing. Don't bottle it up, a useless thing and burdensome to carry; but give it free course, and like a stream gushing forth in the desert, it will quicken a thousand sweet blossoms of love into beautiful existence."

"Take the child of a stranger to my bosom? Give my children's place to another? No—no—no! I cannot bear the thought. Sacred to my own dear babes shall their mother's breast remain. No other head must find a pillow there. Anything but that! Anything but that!"

And the mourner turned her face away, and hid it from sight; murmuring as she did so, "If this is asked of me, it is more than I can give."

"All children are alike precious in the eyes of God and his angels," said the friend.

But the mourner gave no response.

"And what is mother-love, but God's love flowing into the mother's heart? It is not her love, but His; and all its pure intensity, its deep blessedness, is from Him, to the end that His children may be tenderly cared for. And He can give, and has given, this deep blessedness, even where the babe has not been flesh of the flesh, and bone of the bone. He will give it to you again, if you take to your loving breast a tender infant whose mother's heart is cold and

pulseless. I know where there is such an infant. I looked, to-day, into the heaven of its soft blue eyes; on its pure white forehead, shaded by rich clusters of chestnut hair; on its cheeks, ruddy as spring flowers; on its lips, that I felt like devouring with kisses. I looked at it, and thought of the happiness it could bring to your heart; and of the life of neglect, and suffering, and evil that you might change into one of heaven-infused delight."

There was a sign of interest in the mourner.

"I have rarely seen a sweeter babe. It lay on a pillow beside its poor mother when she died last night. She would have it there; and her last look was upon its sleeping face; and oh! what a tender, yearning, sorrowing look it was; for she knew, that it must be left behind with stranger hearts."

The image of that living babe and its dead mother touched the mourner's feelings. She moved uneasily, and then turned her eyes upon the face of her visitor.

"What will be done with the child?" she asked.

"Heaven only knows," was the answer.

"Where is it?"

"With a poor woman until after the burial. But she has a babe of her own, and cannot keep it. Some one spoke of the Alms-House. But I have seen the condition of infants there. No, it shall not be taken to the Alms-House."

Nothing more was said for nearly a minute; and each sat, looking upon the floor, busy with her own thoughts.

"I wish you could see that babe," said the visitor.

But there was no reply. Another long silence followed.

"A sweeter babe my eyes have not rested upon for a long, long time."

Still the mourner sat, with her eyes upon the floor.

"May I bring him for you to see?"

"Why do that? I don't want the child!" The mourner spoke with slight impatience, and the manner of one who was moving in a certain direction against her will.

"It will do your heart good to look upon his baby face, in which he even smiles back upon you as from a mirror. You don't know what a cherub he is."

Nay, to the proposition, was not said positively; though yea was withholden.

An hour afterward, and there was light in the chamber which had been shrouded for days and weeks in funereal gloom; light coming in at the windows, and light born of love in the

chamber itself. A babe was lying on the bed, and the mourner, already half forgetting her sorrow in the awakening of a tender joy, sat looking upon its rosy face as if her eyes were fixed by a magic spell. Whether it were fancy or fact, we cannot say; but, as the bereaved mother looked on the countenance of this stranger child, it grew steadily into the likeness of the babe, which death took from her clinging arms not long before. How many times her lips touched softly the baby's lips; how many times she took the pink velvet of its hands in hers, holding them tenderly, as something precious; how many times she drew the curls of its brown hair between her fingers! And each time, love, in gentle electric currents, passed from the babe to her.

The baby did not go back on that day; nor on the next. No; it had made for itself a home in the heart of this sorrowing mother, opening the shut windows of that heart and letting in heaven's sunshine.

Nothing to live for! That was a mistake; the evil suggestion of an evil counselor, who sits down beside us, when we draw around our souls the drapery of selfish sorrow. She had much to live for. Oh! no; her work was not done. She saw it lying about her, and gathering for her hands in the future; and her heart went down into it, and rested upon it in peace and hope.

Day by day the baby grew in beauty, and day by day it opened new chambers in the mourner's heart—chambers which had been shut and locked—opened and possessed them as his own.

Nothing to live for! It seemed to her that she had, now, a world of new interests; and a world of new duties. Not cold, hard duties, into which she must descend in painful reluctance; but duties in which love was an inspiration. She was of those who tenderly love children. The loss of her own touched her very life. It seemed as if she must die under the

pain of this affliction. And so, when the objects of her deep affection were taken, she said to herself, "My work is done;" and, sitting down in darkness, she refused to be comforted. But that tender love of children was God's love in her heart, and, as all souls are his, he could fill it with life and joy again if she would but let it have free course in some new direction. The babe of another might be as purely loved as the babe she had rejoiced over when its feeble cry first came to her ears as the sound of delicious music. And just as purely loved was this stranger babe, in time; just as tenderly cared for; just as wisely ministered to for its best good, as if it had been her own.

No, her work was not done. She had something to live for, as all have, whom God leaves still among the harvest fields of life. And you, reader, be your age, condition, or sorrows what they may, have something to live for. If your hands are drooping idly; if you have shut yourself up in the gloom of some dark room; or lie prostrate under the ruins of worldly hopes after some great misfortune; awake! Arouse yourself! God still has work for you to do, and in that work He will give you peace and consolation. If this thought does not quicken your pulses with a healthier beat; we give you another, and one of graver import. What are you writing in your book of life, in all these unprofitable days? In that book of life, from which you will be judged when this fitful fever is past, and you rise into the world of eternal verities? Do not push the question aside! Do not call it intrusive! It comes to you, now, with a directness that claims attention. It is not the moralist speaking from himself. He is only the medium of a solemn admonition. Are you, in any sense, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, or visiting those who are sick, or in prison? If not, depend upon it, you have something to live for, and the quicker your hands take hold upon your work, the better will it be for you in this world, and in the great hereafter.

# OUR MOTHERS AND GRANDMOTHERS.

BY EMILY H. MAY.



**F**ORTY-SEVEN years ago, when our mothers were yet children, and our grandmothers were still young matrons, all Europe was convulsed with war. France, after more than twenty years of victories,

found she had to struggle against a continent in arms. Germany, long enthralled, rose, with a roar of vengeance, to win her independence. The martial spirit was everywhere aroused.

The talk was of nothing but battles. Even fashion bowed to the influence of the hour, and fair and delicate women wore bonnets as seen in our initial illustration, shaped like helmets. This was in the year of grace 1813.

Ten years earlier, or thereabouts, our grandmothers were probably fashionable belles. How did they dress? The preceding engraving, copied from a *Magazine of Fashion*, printed in Paris in 1803, represents a ball dress of that year. The long mitts depicted in this illustration, long



BALL-DRESS OF 1803.



STREET DRESS OF 1804.

kept their ground, and only went out of fashion within our own memory. In the street, the dress was somewhat different, though substantially the same, as will be seen from the engraving above, which represents a fashionable lady of the year 1804.

It was in a similar costume to this that

Josephine appeared, when she first became Empress of France. The belles of Washington society, when Jefferson was elected President for a second term, walked down Pennsylvania Avenue in precisely such attire. A year or two later the fashions changed a little, as seen by the next illustration, which depicts a lady

graving, was in two colors, being brown down to the waist, while the rest was green. Shoes and breeches, it will be observed, still kept their ground. The lady's costume is a winter one, the dress being a walking coat of cloth.

Skipping five years, we come to 1811. The style of dress had now altered again. Short waists, indeed, were still in vogue, and hoops, which had gone out with Marie Antoinette and the old regime, continued to be unfashionable. But, in minor details, the costume was changed: and hardly for the better. The military excitement of the times seems to have destroyed all taste. Even after peace was declared, the fashions remained as hideous as before. This will be seen by our next engraving, which is



COSTUMES OF 1806.

of the year 1806, escorted by a dandy of the time. The coat of the gentleman, in this en-



COSTUME OF 1811.



COSTUME OF 1816.

taken from a French fashion-book of 1816. The appearance of the Scotch Highlanders in Paris had brought Tartans into vogue, and dresses, as in this example, were made of Tartan up to the knee. But waists were still as short as ever; the gown still clung to the person; and the bonnets were, in every sense, hideous. In England, the fashions were somewhat different, being several years behind those of France. The war, in fact, had interrupted communication. When the Duchess d'Angouleme, niece of the restored king, and daughter of the decapitated Louis XVI., made her entry into Paris, she appeared in such an enormous, old-fashioned hat, that even the ragged boys on the pavement laughed as she drove by.

A few years more and we find ourselves at

1820. Our mothers were now in the height of their belledom. A walking dress of this period is the subject of the next illustration. There



COSTUMES OF 1820.

is a body, it will be seen, something like a cuirass, and this was red, while the skirt of the dress was stone-color: the taste for highly contrasted colors, in fact, which the long wars had brought in, had not yet gone out. The costume of a gentleman of that period may also be seen in this illustration. Observe the short waist of the coat and long tail; the curious hat; and the tightly strapped pantaloons.

We finish, as we began, with a ball-dress. But the ball-dress of 1828 is a very different affair from that of 1803. It was in a huge head-dress, like that seen in our engraving, that the Countess of Blessington was painted; and the portraits of L. E. L. have rendered everybody familiar with one not very dissimi-



COSTUME OF 1828.

lar. Beyond 1828 we shall not go. With the fashions, since that year, some one, in most families, is acquainted. Old wardrobes can still produce these grotesque dresses.

## REDMAN'S RUN.

BY FRANK LEE BENEDICT.

[Entered according to Act of Congress, In the year 1860, by Frank Lee Benedict, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

### CHAPTER I.

I was sitting in the library, crouched in the recess of the oriel window, that my book might have all the advantage possible of the waning light.

I was a great reader of romances in those days, as every solitary boy is sure to be, and I was so deeply engrossed in the escape of Mary Stuart from Lochleven, that I did not notice the rapid approach of evening. I hurried over the pages until I found that the poor queen was safe, for a time at least, and laid the volume down quite breathless with excitement.

I should have been glad to have sat there an hour longer, dreaming aimlessly, perhaps, but very pleasantly, of the scenes and characters which had taken so strong a hold of my imagination, but I was not allowed farther quiet. There was a slamming of doors, a sound of voices, for every noise echoed with tenfold force through that old house; then I heard Prudence Winship call me loudly from the hall,

"Paul, Paul Chenery!"

There was such an appeal for assistance in the tone, that I could not find it in my heart to remain silent, particularly as I knew that Mrs. Prudence would never rest until she had discovered my hiding-place, and dragged me out of it by dint of remonstrance or persuasion.

I rose unwillingly enough and went out into the hall where the old lady stood, with the air of a woman who had so many things on her hands, that she remained idle from sheer inability to decide which had better be done first.

"Oh! there you are," she exclaimed, quite fretful from agitation, "I've been hunting for you all over the house! Do, for mercy's sake, help me a little; it's a'most time for your uncle to be here, and things ain't half ready."

"What can I do for you?" I asked, not at all surprised at the request, for Prudence had lectured and governed me so often as a child, that neither she nor I remembered it ought to be different now.

"If you'll just get the wine out and set it to cool: I ain't going to give the man the keys, there's no trusting nobody! I've got to run back into the kitchen, or that dreadful woman

'll burn the meat or upset the soup—oh! them Irish! And do just see that somebody lights the hall and parlor, and if you'll only take up the flowers you picked for the young lady's room, and——"

"That will do for the present, Prudence!"

"Yes, I know: it's a born shame to trouble you, but a body hain't got but one pair of hands. And oh! do step into Mr. Maurice's chamber, and make sure that I haven't forgot anything, or he'll make such a disturbance!"

"All right, aunty; run off to your work."

"I'm going! Oh! sakes alive, I do wish Mr. Redman would ever let a body know in time when he's invited company! I declare I hain't set down since daylight, and my feet ache to that degree——"

The rest of the sentence was lost in the distance, for Prudence had pattered away through the hall; and I soon heard confused murmurs from the kitchen, which proved that something had gone wrong during her absence.

I smiled a little at the good woman's excitement, and went away to fulfill her requests, wondering somewhat about the guests whom my uncle was to bring home with him.

Of course I found the vases of flowers upon the upper hall table, where I had left them two hours before, and so took them myself into the chamber which the young lady was to occupy.

It was a pleasant room overlooking the garden, one window completely covered with a rose vine still red with blossoms, through which the new moon was stealing in, while a soft wind stirred the flowers, until it seemed as if the light had half awakened them. I marveled what manner of girl she would prove to be, if she would be gratified by the care I had taken, and if she would sit by her moonlit casement late into the night, as I did by mine, weaving all sorts of strange fancies, more engrossing from their very impossibility.

Then I stole softly out, feeling as if I was wrong to intrude where she would so soon sit alone with her fancies, and went down the passages to my cousin's chambers, among the most comfortable in the house, for Maurice was accustomed to claim the best of everything. Aunt Prudence had shown her usual care; I could



see nothing for him to find fault about, and I idled away a few moments there likewise, thinking of my cousin, and wondering if he would saub and worry me after his old fashion.

We had not met for over a year. Maurice had been in Europe—he had always done whatever best pleased him, for our uncle seemed to find his chief pleasure in gratifying the young man's fancies. I made up my mind that he would find me greatly changed; I was grown up too now, and would endure even less patiently than of old, his overbearing manners.

My somewhat unamiable train of thought was disturbed by hearing the rapid gallop of a horse up to the house; and I concluded that Maurice, with his usual impetuosity, had ridden on in advance of the rest of the party.

I went very slowly down the stairs, rather dreading the interview, for my cousin had never loved me, and I felt confident that, even after our lengthened separation, his first words would hide a sneer.

I heard him giving orders to the servant who was leading away his horse; then he entered the hall, returning Prudence's greeting with his customary indifference.

"Of course you are glad to see me back, old lady! Upon my word, you look as blooming as a December rose. But where is that pet of yours, my hopeful young cousin, I am astonished that he isn't here to do the honors in his usual lordly style?"

"Here I am, Maurice," I called out; "and I am very glad to see you."

"No doubt of that, young one! Come along, and let me see if you are at all presentable."

The salutation was not pleasant; but I went toward him as he stood in the parlor door way, determined that all should go on amicably, for that night at least.

He did not stir—never extended his hand until I held out mine.

"Why, I almost think you've grown, youngster," he said, laughingly, yet with something in his tone that stung my pride. "Aunt Prudence can't measure you any longer with her apron string, can she?"

"He's not so very much shorter than his uncle," put in Prudence. "Because you happen to be a six footer, you think everybody else ought to be."

"Oh! no, no! Let the body be in keeping with the mind—hey, my boy?"

A bitter retort rose to my lips, but I checked it; and Prudence began to question him with great volubility.

"How long before your uncle'll get here?"

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"Not more than half an hour—you'd better stir yourselves. They were ready to start just as I rode off; the boat was late to-night, or we should all have been here some time ago."

At that moment there was a sound without which made each one start—a mournful sort of cry, scarcely human, yet with a world of human pain in its unearthliness.

"The Lord have mercy on us!" ejaculated Prudence. "What can that be?"

"That old crazy woman!" said Maurice. "Tell somebody to drive her off, Paul."

"Who?" I asked.

"As if I knew! Are you a lunatic yourself? She started up in the road before me about a mile from here, and frightened my horse half to death. I gave her a cut with my whip, and she ran off with a howl, but I could hear her following me every little while."

"Poor thing!" I said, "she must be taken care of!"

"Really; do you own this house?" asked Maurice, sneeringly. "My uncle may not take it very kindly if you turn the place into a bed-lam."

I made no reply, but went out on to the terrace, followed by Prudence, whose fears had vanished when she found that nothing supernatural was near.

I saw through the night a woman toiling up the avenue, her hair streaming wildly over her shoulders, her arms extended as if imploring protection from some invisible danger. I watched her with a feeling of awe, which Prudence evidently shared, for she stood perfectly silent by my side.

The woman tottered on with violent efforts, like a person struggling against a heavy wind. I could hear her breath distinctly, gasping and short, hissing through her clenched teeth as she beat the air with her long hands, and pressed forward like some terrible spectre approaching through the gloom.

Before I could collect my scattered faculties she had reached the verandah, there was another startling moan, and she fell like a lifeless mass upon the steps, her head hidden amid her long hair.

"Merciful goodness!" exclaimed Prudence, flinging up her hands in surprise and fright.

I ran down the steps and raised the poor creature. She had not fainted, for her eyes were open, and she muttered feebly, but she was so exhausted by physical weariness, that she lay passive in my arms. I could lift her without difficulty, for want or disease had worn her almost to a skeleton, and I carried her into

the hall, followed by Prudence, who seemed quite to have lost her usual presence of mind.

Maurice came out of the parlor, muttering a curse when he saw that I had brought the woman in to the house.

"Take that creature away!" he exclaimed, angrily. "You little fool, what do you think my uncle will say?"

I made no answer, nor in any way heeded the torrent of invective which he poured forth.

"Won't you let her be put in your room for a little, Prudence?" I said; "she will die if she goes out again."

"Of course," she replied, all her womanly feelings roused at once. "I'll help you take her up; for, if the servants knew there was a crazy woman in the house, they'd go mad themselves."

"Throw her out in the barn," said Maurice.

"Shame on you!" exclaimed Prudence, with a burst of honest indignation. "Think if it was yourself; nobody knows what they may come to in this world."

Maurice stamped his foot with passion, the old, fierce temper rising at the least opposition.

"I've three minds to have you all thrown out together," he muttered.

"There's two words to that, Mr. Maurice," retorted Prudence; "I'll just see what Mr. Redman says to such talk."

All this time, the woman lay moaning in the chair where I had placed her.

"Get a glass of wine out of the dining-room, Prudence," I said; "she looks as if she was dying."

The old lady ran off in great haste, while Maurice stood muttering and reproaching me.

"I would like to murder you," he said.

"I have no doubt," I replied, "but you may as well let me alone, for I shall not see this poor thing die before my eyes."

"If my uncle happens to come——"

"That is my affair! He is not inhuman enough to blame me."

"If you don't get her away in three minutes, I'll fling you out-doors after her."

"No, you won't," returned Prudence, coming back with the wine, which I proceeded to administer; "no, you won't, Mr. Maurice! Boy and man I've known you for bad, but there's some things you can't do."

Prudence was the only one in the house who ever resisted Maurice; and he knew that there was no appeal, for our uncle would never speak harshly to her even where his favorite was in question.

The woman swallowed the wine with difficulty

at first, then drank eagerly. Suddenly she let the glass fall and started to her feet, brushing away her hair so that the light fell full on her face.

"Gracious powers!" muttered Prudence, staggering back.

"Oh! you've had enough of it, have you?" sneered Maurice; "she is a beauty!"

Prudence turned upon him with a stern look.

"Take care what you do, young man," she said—"take care!"

Maurice shrunk back, and for a few moments Prudence stood gazing at the woman with a horror far deeper than my own. It was a strange sight—that tall, slight form worn to a shadow—long masses of auburn hair, which had once been soft and beautiful, falling about the attenuated face; eyes gleaming with insanity staring around; and all the while upon the bloodless lips a patient, serene smile, which fairly beautified the whole countenance.

"It's gone," she muttered—"it's gone!"

Suddenly she caught Prudence's hand, and stared wildly in her face.

"Do you know?" she whispered. "Did you see which way they took it?"

Prudence shrank back, weeping aloud, her firm nerves seemed completely unsettled by the shock.

The woman dropped her hand, turned and saw me standing there. She clutched my arm, pushed my hair back with her icy fingers, muttering wildly. Then the look of eager expectation died out of her face, and she turned away with a heavy moan.

"I can't tell—I don't know! Oh! which way?—which way?"

She took a step or two forward, and her eyes fell on Maurice, who was awed to silence. She cried out again, not loudly, but with that same wailing tone, and darted back between Prudence and myself.

"They are after me," she cried; "save me, do save me! I got away—they starved me, whipped me—don't let them have me again."

"Come with me," I said, taking her hand gently; "I will hide you safely. Come."

"Yes," she answered; "you look kind! Is it the face?—is it?"

She peered fixedly at me for an instant, then shook her head, repeating many times,

"I can't tell—I can't tell! It's so confused—so strange." Then she glanced at Maurice, and the same shiver of terror shook her frame. "Don't let him come—he'll tell them, I know he will! Take me away—do take me away."

I led her up the back staircase which led out

of a side passage, and went on to the house-keeper's room, the woman pleading piteously the while, and Prudence following with many tears. Once in the room, and the door locked, the poor creature seemed to feel that she was in safety. She released her hold of my arm and fell into a chair.

"I'm hungry," she muttered, "hungry."

Some remnants of food set on the table, I gave them to her, and she began to eat greedily, tearing the meat with her teeth like a wild animal.

"Oh! it's dreadful, dreadful!" cried Prudence.

"Who can she be?" I questioned. "Where can she have come from?"

"How do I know!" returned Prudence, with much excitement. "What makes you ask me, boy? You see she's crazy, don't you?"

I looked at her in astonishment. She was very pale, and shaking from head to foot.

"She can't hurt you," I said, "she is too weak even to stand."

"I'm not afraid," said Prudence, trembling more violently; "not a bit afraid."

"What are we to do with her?" I asked; "we can't leave her alone."

"I won't stay with her," gasped Prudence; "I won't, I won't! And there's the carriage! Mercy on me, I had forgotten all about dinner. I don't know what to do—oh! dear, oh! dear!"

She wrung her hands, and appeared so much distressed that I could make nothing of it. The insane woman had devoured the meat, and was gazing curiously at her.

"Hush!" she said, in a frightened whisper. "They'll whip you if they hear you. Don't—don't!"

"I declare I shall go crazy myself," groaned Prudence; "I shall indeed."

"Crazy!" repeated the lunatic, "crazy! Oh! that's all over with long ago. Hark! he's stopped crying now—he lies very still. Hush, little one, hush!"

She rocked her body to and fro as if quieting a child, motioned us to be silent, and began droning a sort of tune singularly touching.

"I can't stand it," sobbed Prudence; "Paul, I can't!"

"Go down stairs then; I am not at all afraid."

There was a distant sound of voices, confused murmurs rising from below, which attracted the stranger's attention. She sprang up at once, raving more loudly than ever.

"They are coming," she shrieked, "they are after me! Don't let me scream, don't!"

With an instinct almost like reason, she clasped her hands against her mouth to keep

back her cries, biting deeply into the flesh, and running aimlessly about the apartment. But she was too much exhausted even for insanity to give her more than momentary strength; she fell upon the floor, coiling herself up, and hiding her head as she done down stairs.

"She will not stir again for some time," I whispered. "Go down stairs and tell my uncle, he will know what ought to be done."

"Will he?" asked Prudence. "Oh! I'll tell him, I'll tell him. But you mustn't stay here; perhaps I had better, and let you call him. No, I can't—if it was to save my soul I couldn't."

"I think you are mad yourself! Go down quietly and do as I tell you. Why, I thought you were a woman of more sense."

"I'm getting old, you see," she replied, struggling hard to regain her composure; "things trouble me more than they used to. Well, I'll go down. Don't speak—let her alone—it's only raving, you know, and no use to make her, the visitors might hear. I'll go, Paul, I'll go."

But I had fairly to push her out of the room, for she seemed quite frantic between her dread of staying alone with the mad woman, or of leaving me.

I must have remained there for twenty minutes. The time appeared very long, not that I was afraid, but I had scarcely ever seen a crazy person before, and it was like being shut in with an evil spirit, to stay alone and watch her insanity.

She lay quite still for a time, and I never dared to turn my eyes away. At last, she raised her head and looked around, smiled strangely when she saw me, whispering,

"You have sent them off! I am tired, tired! These thin slippers, ball-room slippers."

She put out her foot, her shoe was old and torn, but had once been thick and strong.

"Ball-room slippers, you know," she went on; "there was no time to change. Is the baby waking? Hush, little one, hush!"

Then she hummed the mournful lullaby again, and grew quiet in her efforts to soothe the child that was not there.

"Is it far yet?" she asked, suddenly. "Why doesn't he come? I am so tired, oh! so tired. Don't let them steal the baby; he's very quiet, they can't find us now. Hush, little one, hush!"

"The baby is asleep," I said, softly. "Where did you come from?"

"A long, long way! They beat me, they starved me, but I got out—oh! I was so wakeful and quick! I haven't slept for ages, waiting for an opportunity."

"Where were you? Can you tell?"

She began babbling impotently, growing so excited in her efforts to speak intelligibly, that I did not dare question her farther.

I heard a step in the hall, which I knew to be my uncle's; then there was a low tap on the door, but the mad woman's quick ear caught the sound. She darted toward me, a fury so terrible blazing in her eyes, that for the first time I felt alarmed. I opened the door quickly, and my uncle entered.

When the woman saw him she uttered another cry, sprang forward and tried to rush out of the apartment. My uncle caught her, and held her fast in spite of her struggles; while all the while her shrieks rang through the house.

"Help me, Paul!" he exclaimed. "Tie her hands—quick!"

I took my handkerchief and bound her arms as well as I could, while she raved and resisted with all her force.

"Liar! murderer!" she cried. "I know—it is the face, the arch-demon!"

"Stop!" said my uncle, sternly; "do you see that whip on the table?"

She tore herself away from him, and cowered to the farthest end of the room, hiding her face in the shawl, and moaning with fear.

"Do you know her?" I asked.

"How should I?" he said, angrily.

"Yes, yes!" gibbered the woman, "I knew—it is the arch demon! And the child—it is gone! Help! help! they have stolen the child!"

"Go away, Paul," said my uncle. "I know better than you how to deal with her."

"But you may want help——"

"Do as I bid you!" he exclaimed, stamping his foot with passion. "Leave the room, sir!"

I obeyed at once, and hurried through the passages to escape the echo of those fearful cries. I do not think the newly arrived guests heard them, for Prudence's room was in a distant wing, separated by wide halls and rows of chambers, from the apartments which had been arranged for them to occupy.

I went to my room, arranged my dress as well as my trembling hands would allow, and hurried down stairs to find Prudence, eager to confer with her concerning the strange mad woman.

## CHAPTER II.

In my haste I ran directly against some person coming through the hall, when I saw a pale girl, with long curls and white garments. I was ready to think that I had met a ghost, so completely unstrung were my nerves by the events of the past hour.

Of course an instant's reflection assured me that I had met the young lady whom my uncle had brought with him, so I stammered out what apologies I might, and went on.

A strange feeling passed over me; my agitation was succeeded by a singular calm, as if the single glance of those girlish eyes had possessed a magic power. I had no time to meditate upon it, for in the dining-room I found Prudence giving the last touches to the dinner-table, but pale and troubled, and going about with a hesitation very different from the self-possession with which she usually performed her duties.

"My uncle is up stairs," I said, "and he sent me down."

Prudence made no answer, walking around the table, changing the position of the dishes, then restoring them to their former place, evidently quite unconscious of what she was about.

"Did you ever see her before, Prudence?" I asked.

"The boy's a fool!" she returned. "I never want to see her again," she added, sitting down in the nearest chair; "she frightened me 'most out of my wits."

"It is very strange that she should have come here."

"It just happened so," said Prudence; "she's got out of a 'sylum some where, and wandered off here."

"That must be it. What do you think my uncle will do?"

"Send her back, I suppose. For mercy's sake don't never say another word about her, unless you want to scare me to death."

Before I could answer, my uncle entered the room, but he gave me no time to pour out the flood of questions that rose to my lips.

"How do you do, Paul?" he said, shaking my hand with as much cordiality as he ever showed me. "Have you been well?"

"Very well, sir. But the crazy woman?"

"Is quiet, and I have set Waters to watch over her. You look wilder than she did."

"But who can she be?"

"I am really unable to say; she has evidently escaped from a lunatic asylum—probably the one just out of town, and has walked the thirty miles."

He went up to Prudence, and I heard her question him eagerly, although I could not catch the words; but I heard a portion of his reply.

"All a mistake—we never saw her before."

"But she was so like——"

"Don't be a fool, my good Prudence. Just think no more about it. Well, Paul," he added,

aloud, "you look dreadfully mysterious, but I am afraid you cannot make a romance out of this."

"He has tried hard," said Maurice, entering as my uncle spoke. "I think you must be extremely obliged to him for turning the house into a lunatic asylum."

"He did quite right," replied my uncle, more sharply than I had ever heard him address my cousin; "I should have been ashamed of him if he had been inhuman enough to drive her away."

"Oh! if you choose to take in crazy women I've nothing to say," replied Maurice, flippantly. "You had better send her down to amuse Miss Morgan."

"I am quite capable of managing my own affairs, sir," replied my uncle. I could scarcely believe it was Maurice he was addressing in that angry tone.

"But who is she? how came she here?" questioned Maurice, in a more respectful way.

"That I cannot tell; I think she has escaped from the private lunatic asylum, just this side of town, and I am going to send Waters back with her. You will please say nothing about it, for I don't wish my visitors frightened out of their senses before they have been in the house an hour."

"I should think Mrs. Prudence meant to starve them," returned Maurice. "Do you know if we are to have dinner to-night?"

"Surely; it must be late," said my uncle. "Please hurry it up, Mrs. Winship."

"It will be on the table in five minutes," said Prudence, gruffly; "a body can't do more than forty things at once, no matter what Mr. Maurice may think."

She grumbled herself out toward the kitchen, and my cousin said,

"That's a very respectful old woman, she ought to be packed out of the house!"

"You are leaving Miss Morgan alone," said my uncle; "it is scarcely civil, my boy."

Maurice went away, and my uncle turned to me.

"Come and be introduced to our visitors. I want every attention shown them, Paul, for I am anxious to see Maurice married to the young lady."

"Are they engaged?"

"Not positively, but she likes him, evidently, and her parents are well pleased. He met them in Europe, and traveled with them for some time; the daughter is very wealthy in her own right."

I pitied the girl if she felt any interest in

Maurice. He had been a bad, dangerous boy, and I knew well that time had only strengthened his evil passions, however carefully they might have been concealed beneath his pleasant and winning manner, he could at will assume.

I followed my uncle into the parlor, and was duly presented to the strangers. I was not timid, but there was a feeling at my heart for which I could render no account, and which left me trembling like a frightened child.

Mrs. Morgan was a subdued, crushed-looking woman, with a sweet smile and pleasant voice; there were the remnants of former beauty in her face, but years of pain and endurance had worn away its freshness, until she appeared like a shadow of what her youth had been.

When I looked at her husband I understood it all. Such pomposity and insufferable egotism I never saw in any man's face and manner; he touched my hand in a patronizing way, and addressed me as he would have done some poor dependent on his bounty.

I think my face must have shown how deeply I was hurt and offended; for, when I glanced toward Maurice, he was watching me with an undisguised sneer, so I restrained my feelings at once.

By my cousin's side was seated the young girl whom I had encountered in the hall. My uncle presented me to her politely enough, though as he might have introduced a mere boy; but she bowed with graceful courtesy, and her smile sent the same wild shiver through my heart.

"So you don't dine in the nursery any more?" Maurice half whispered.

I made no reply, and my cousin bent over the young lady and talked to her in a low, confidential tone, so there was nothing left for me but to walk away, though I saw by the apologetic glance of her eyes that she was no willing sharer in his rudeness.

No one talked to me at dinner, except when Mrs. Morgan addressed me in her frightened way; but her husband was sure to check her unpleasantly, so, after a time, I sat quite disregarded.

I watched Maurice with a feeling of bitter resentment stronger than I had ever before experienced; yet, with it all, there came a consciousness, based upon what grounds I could not have told, yet strong and confident—Alice Morgan did not love him! I saw that he was lost in one of the mad passions which had so often burned his heart, and I hated him that he dared take the impurity of his thoughts into the presence of that innocent girl.

Yet, one not intimately acquainted with his nature and past life would have thought I judged him harshly. I knew Maurice well; he had been false and artful as a boy, guilty of acts which would have been dark stains in the character of a hardened man, doubly odious when perpetrated by one who should have possessed the innocence of youth. His life at college had been a constant scene of dissipation; his after career, as far as it came under my knowledge, a fit continuation, and I was certain that the time he had spent abroad had only been wasted in more degrading vice.

He was a tall, beautifully formed man; his face was handsome, but to me, who knew its changes so well, absolutely revolting. He was not more than twenty-six then, but he had never been young. My uncle had not, in the slightest degree, restrained him; on the contrary, by his indulgence, he had fostered his evil propensities to the monstrous growth they had attained.

Our lives had been very different; for he had not been content to enjoy the sunshine that so brightened his path, but he had snatched at every little gleam which would have warmed my heart, as if he could not bear that it should be soothed by the slightest touch of happiness.

I could not have been more than five years old when my parents died, yet I remembered every event with perfect distinctness. We were living South, and just before my father's death he sent for Mr. Redman, my lost mother's brother. When all was over, he took me to the North with him, to his own home, and committed me to the care of Prudence. Had I been her own child she could not have watched over me with more affection.

Maurice was twelve years old then, the most thoroughly spoiled boy it is possible to imagine. He had always lived with our uncle, for his parents died in Europe while he was still an infant, and Mr. Redman had adopted him, his father having been a favorite brother, whereas my mother he had never loved.

From the first day that we met, Maurice hated me with an intensity far beyond his years. Many a time he committed some mischievous act for the sole purpose of ascribing it to me. He convinced my uncle that I was an habitual liar, young as I was, and by every sort of artifice prevented his ever becoming attached to me, even if he had possessed the inclination, which I doubt.

Prudence protected me as far as was possible, but she could not prevent my uncle's treating me with indifference, or guard me against Maurice's sneers and plots. After a time, he went

away to school, and that was the happiest season of my life. My uncle was in Congress, and the intervals of leisure were usually spent in town. Prudence and I were quite at liberty to enjoy ourselves after our own fashion, and she spared no pains to make my childhood a pleasant one.

Without her care I should have died, for I was far from strong, and the slightest carelessness or exposure was sure to be followed by a severe illness.

Sometimes during the summer Maurice returned to spend his vacations. Such weeks were unpleasant enough, and Prudence rejoiced as much as myself when the time came for him to go back to school, or my uncle took him upon some pleasure tour.

I was not sent away to school; but fortunately the village pastor was a man of profound learning, and during all those years I was under his care; and, as I was fond of books, I made so good use of my time that, although but thirteen when Maurice entered college, I was quite as well prepared to have gone as himself. But my uncle showed no disposition to send me, and Maurice had so impressed upon my mind the fact that I was only a dependant on Mr. Redman's bounty that I never asked the privilege.

"It is all very well for me," he would say, "I have a fortune of my own, and shall inherit another; but you are no better than a beggar, and of course my uncle does not feel inclined to spend any more money on you than he can help."

He always said "my uncle" with such an air of ownership, as if I had no claim at all, which, in fact, he daily assured me was the case. Mr. Redman never knew half of his outrageous conduct, or I am certain that he would not have permitted it.

But the time came when my boyish pride was fully roused, and, without a word even to Prudence, I left the house. A letter which I wrote my uncle revealed my purpose—it was full of gratitude and the affection repressed for years, but I had gone never to return—gone to seek my own living.

For once he manifested an interest in me, never rested until he had discovered my whereabouts and taken me home again.

"Remember this," he said, "you have no right to go away. I am your legal guardian, and it is your duty to obey me. This is your home, and if Maurice does not leave you in peace inform me."

After Prudence had finished scolding and

weeping over me, she told me that she had never seen my uncle so uneasy, and that he had been very harsh with Maurice. I think he must have talked severely to my cousin, for he troubled me much less. Indeed, he never found it quite safe again, for, the first time he annoyed me, I gave him so hard a blow with my ball-club that he was willing to content himself with simple taunts and prejudicing Mr. Redman's mind more completely against me.

So the years had passed on, and now I reached manhood—my nineteenth birthday was over. I had always determined that when it came I would begin the world for myself, and my mind was fully made up to inform my uncle of it during the present visit.

For a year past I had seen but little of him; he was seldom at home, seeming to miss Maurice too much to stay long when he did come.

My uncle's affection I had never possessed; that was no new trouble, but during those hurried visits I noticed a change in his usually cold manner. My presence seemed unpleasant to him; he would leave the room if I entered; or, if we conversed together, appeared always to find in my words hidden meanings which I had no thought of giving.

He was passionate, but not harsh, and when his feelings overcame his judgment, and spoke bitterly to me for faults innocently committed, he was sure to be sorry for it. I could see that, not that he ever offered excuses, but he would be more gentle to me after, and at times I could observe upon his face a strange self-reproach which I did not comprehend.

He was not a good man; I knew that, partly by intuition, more by the vague reports which reached even my ears. He was almost avowedly an infidel, and his early life had been reckless in the extreme. That he was an habitual gambler I did not know till long afterward, but when I learned it, I held the fact as a sort of excuse for many other errors which came to my knowledge.

Still his position was a fine one; he had an enviable reputation as a lawyer, and had held many offices of trust, though I suppose it was the same untraceable report of his reckless habits which prevented his acquiring a wide political influence.

But this long digression has taken me far from the events of that night, which was the prelude to a great change in my life.

I was not much more noticed during the evening than I had been at dinner, until Alice was asked to sing. Probably my face showed how much I enjoyed the delicious melody, for I had

unconsciously drawn near the piano, in spite of Maurice's frowns.

"Do you not play yourself, Mr. Chenery?" she asked, abruptly, when her song was finished.

"Oh! yes," I said; "but very seldom for any one but myself."

"Will you not for us? My mother is extremely fond of music."

"Don't bring upon yourself the infliction of school-boy drumming," said Maurice, laughing, though with a threatening look at me which I quite disregarded.

"Then mine must be school-girl drumming," she said, pleasantly, "for your cousin is older than I. Please take my place, Mr. Chenery, and play for me. Mr. Redman, we will banish you."

"That would be too cruel," he said; "I can bear even Paul's discords in your company."

I took my seat at the piano, determined to do my best. I played well, and I knew it; the pastor's wife had been a teacher of music, and instructed me as thoroughly in that accomplishment as her husband had done in my other studies.

When I ceased, Miss Morgan turned to Maurice with a look of surprise.

"I would give the world to play like that," she said. "Really, Mr. Redman, your ear is not very good."

"Paul has improved wonderfully," he replied, but through his smile I saw the pallor of rage creep over his face; his fingers worked nervously upon the piano. I knew that he was longing to strangle me then and there, and I rather enjoyed the consciousness.

But my uncle's quick eye was upon us; he had no intention of allowing me to cause his favorite even a momentary annoyance.

"Shall we have a game of whist, Mrs. Morgan?" he asked of the little pale woman, who always started when addressed, as if she expected a blow, and, before venturing to answer, glanced timidly toward her husband.

"I am quite willing," said that majestic personage, before she had time to speak, "but who will make a fourth?"

"Oh! Paul plays a very tolerable game," said my uncle.

"But," stammered the little woman, "he may not wish——"

"My dear!" thundered the husband.

She shrunk into herself and was silenced at once.

"Oh! he will be delighted," returned my uncle. "Come, Paul, get the cards, and be Mrs. Morgan's partner."

There was no refusal possible, and I obeyed with the best grace I could. I hated cards, and would much sooner have had my little finger cut off than have been stationed at that abominable green board. But there they fastened me for two mortal hours, while Maurice talked with Alice at the farther end of the room.

No wonder Mrs. Morgan looked pale and worn out, if she had often been subjected to that martyrdom. If we lost, Mr. Morgan reproached her with her stupidity; if we won, he grew quite furious, and more than insinuated his solemn conviction that I cheated.

All the while the murmur of Maurice's voice was ringing in my ears, and Alice Morgan's musical laugh sorely distracted my thoughts.

Late into the night I sat by my window recalling the events of the past day. Prudence had told me that the insane woman was perfectly quiet, and that Waters was sitting with her. She was to be sent to the asylum that night, and my uncle had given orders that no one should enter the room where she was confined.

Much I thought of that young girl who had so unexpectedly crossed my path. I gave my feelings no name, but they were tumultuous and strong, and with them arose a deeper aversion for my cousin than I had ever felt.

The gray dawn broke before I deemed the night half spent. A step in the hall roused me; I opened my door and peered cautiously out.

My uncle was passing through to his chamber. He wore a riding-coat, and looked completely worn out.

"That is well," I heard him mutter; "that is well."

I knew that he had accompanied Waters upon his journey; it was a singular thing for him, selfish and loving his ease, to take so deep an interest in an unknown lunatic.

I went back to my room, and sat by the window until it was broad daylight, pondering upon those things, and sorely perplexed to find a solution of the mystery.

### CHAPTER III.

Long before any one else in the house appeared to be stirring, I left my room and went out into the grounds, for I was still so much excited that the confinement of those old walls seemed terribly oppressive.

The house stood on an eminence, a winding drive sloped down to the road, and on either side of the dwelling were pleasant, old-fashioned gardens. At the back, was a sort of lawn ending in three terraces, and beyond, the hill sloped

gradually down through a grove of hickory and chestnut trees. A little below, a wide brook dashed through, leaving the banks precipitous and broken, with sharp ledges of rock hanging over the stream. Looking up the creek, the rocks loomed higher and more broken, extending across the bed of the torrent and forming a cascade, down which the waters leaped in a sheet of spray, paused an instant upon a broad, flat rock, covered with green moss and ferns, then fell into the channel beneath, white and feathery as a rush of snow.

The creek was very deep at all seasons of the year, but when swollen by spring rains it was quite impassable, and frequently overflowed the flats opposite the house for acres. The lands had been in the possession of my uncle's family ever since the Revolution; and the stream was known through the country as Redman's Run, giving, in fact, its name to the whole estate.

It was a lonely and picturesque spot, and had been my favorite haunt from childhood. Great hemlocks stretched their gnarled trunks over the waters; tall pines grew upon the very edge of the topmost cliffs; below the falls the current was broken by rocks that had been flung down by freshets; and, after a heavy rain, the roar of the torrent could be heard at a great distance.

I went down to the Run, and clambered up the rocks to the top of the cascade, and seated myself upon the trunk of a fallen hemlock, looking dreamily into the waters below.

I caught the flutter of a shawl along the footpath that edged the brook; and, looking again, saw Alice Morgan standing beneath me watching the leap of the cascade.

I went down to the place where she stood; but the waters drowned every sound, so that she did not notice my approach until I was close beside her.

She started, gave me such a sly look and a smile so beautiful, that, for the first time, a feeling of timidity came over me.

"I thought myself the earliest riser in the house," she said, "but I see that you were in advance of me."

She was even more lovely than I had thought the night before. Her eyes were almost black with excitement; and her pale complexion had caught a glow from the morning air that added to its beautiful transparency.

"What a picturesque spot!" she said; "your uncle told me it was very striking, but I had no idea of anything so bold and fresh-like."

"It is still finer from the top of the cliff," I replied; "but I suppose you would hardly venture the ascent?"



"Oh! yes; I can climb like a Swiss girl."

I helped her up the steep path, and she sat down upon the old hemlock, which was so covered with moss and lichen that it was like a couch.

"You must love this place," she said, after a long silence, during which her face was more eloquent than words could have been.

"I never come here without discovering some beauty which never struck me before," I replied.

"Ah, I can understand that! People say that you grow so familiar with beauty as to disregard it, but it never seemed true to me. One needs to become acquainted with a spot like this to take in all its loveliness."

There we sat for a long hour, talking, as I think, few of our age ever converse among themselves. At least, my experience among young men and women has not been favorable; they can chatter fast enough, goodness knows, but anything beyond the merest nonsense I have seldom found.

Alice Morgan was no ordinary girl. Her acquirements were far beyond what could have been expected from her age; and though gentle and womanly in the extreme, she had a range of thought astonishing in its strength and vigor.

"I am surprised you did not go to Europe as well as your cousin," she said, after my expressions of pleasure at the descriptions she had been giving me of places in Italy, which were my favorite dream-haunts.

"My cousin is rich, and I am poor," I replied, doubtless looking very hot and resentful, for she colored at once as if she had been guilty of a rudeness.

"I beg your pardon," she said; "I did not——"

"There is no necessity, Miss Morgan; I am quite accustomed to the contemplation of my poverty, and my cousin reminds me of it so frequently, that I could not forget it if I would."

"Young men are proverbially thoughtless where the feelings of others are concerned," she said, turning away and blushing somewhat at my words.

"Maurice is not thoughtless," I replied, very quietly, but not with any great amount of amiable feeling; "he thinks it best to make me understand my position."

"You will make yourself one!" she said, quickly.

"I mean to, Miss Morgan!"

"And that will be much fuller of enjoyment than one which a man has had no struggle to gain."

She stopped talking, and sat absently flinging

the dead leaves scattered around, into the torrent. I knew well of what she was thinking—of that man to whose fate they were forcing her to link herself, and she shuddered and grew pale as the gloomy future presented itself.

When she saw that I was watching her, she recalled her thoughts with a pleasant smile of excuse; but I caught the echo of a heavy sigh, and knew that her young heart was troubled with thoughts beyond those which should have darkened her years.

"See those beautiful flowers," she said, pointing to a graceful cluster of Michaelmas daisies that drooped over the edge of the cliff. "Please gather me a bouquet."

I went away, and when I returned with the blossoms, she had conquered the unrest which had saddened her face.

"Thank you very much, they are so beautiful! Now I know whom I may thank for the flowers in my room. I wonder if your house-keeper could be so thoughtful and poetical?"

"Did you like them?"

"You do not think me such a Goth as to have done otherwise? My nerves are not at all like a fine lady's, and the odor of flowers is never overpowering to me."

I longed to say something supremely wild and ridiculous, which would have calmed the tumult in my heart; but it is only in novels, I believe, that young men are privileged to astonish stranger damsels by such romance, so I sat quietly down again and endeavored to talk with at least an appearance of calmness.

"It must be time to go back," Alice said, at last; "breakfast will be waiting, and mamma quite confident that some terrible accident has happened to me."

We went down the rocks, and took the path through the grove toward the house.

Maurice was standing at the window of the breakfast-room as we passed, and I knew by the expression of his face that he was furious at the sight of Alice walking quietly by my side.

"You are an early riser, Miss Alice," he said, meeting us in the hall, his displeasure betraying itself through his forced smile.

"I can't fancy any one sleeping late such a lovely morning," she replied.

"And you have been walking?"

"Oh! yes; see what beautiful flowers Mr. Chentry gave me."

"Oh! so you took the boy along for a cavalier—altogether it must have been very romantic."

"Is my mother down stairs?" Alice asked, so

haughtily that Maurice started as if she had struck him.

"She was not in the breakfast-room," he replied, and turned to me with an air of command. "Paul, look in the library—Mrs. Morgan may not know that breakfast is ready."

Alice looked at him with evident displeasure; and, for my own part, I was so furious that my first impulse was to knock him down.

Before any one could speak, Mrs. Morgan descended the stairs, and Alice hurried forward to aid her feeble steps, for she walked already like a sickly old woman.

With an oath, Maurice muttered, "I'll make you repent this insolence."

"Say another rude word to me," I replied, in the same tone, "and I will break this chair over your head."

He knew me well enough to know that once roused I hesitated at nothing, and, with another muttered curse from him, our pleasant colloquy ended.

"Mr. Chenery," called Alice—I hurried toward her. "Mamma knew your mother very

intimately—she says you must look upon her as an old friend."

I took the lady's thin hand, and my heart yearned toward her when I saw the tears in her eyes, and heard her murmur,

"He is very like Emily, very like!"

"So you can pet him to your heart's content," Alice said, laughingly, anxious to dissipate her mother's sad thoughts. "It is very nice to be as young as you and I are, Mr. Chenery."

We went into the breakfast-room, and Mr. Morgan received his wife with his usual dignity; while my uncle took immediate possession of Alice, first giving me a stern look which I perfectly understood.

Maurice soon recovered his good humor, and made himself, as he could do, really charming. It was no wonder that I sat disregarded. I saw Mrs. Morgan's timid eyes steal toward me once in the while with an expression of sympathy; but Alice never turned her head, appearing wholly engrossed in Maurice's conversation.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## THE RULING PASSION.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

[Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1860, by Mrs. Ann S. Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 317.

### CHAPTER X.

It was the doctor from Norwich who left his horse tied to the fence, and knee deep in snow, while he went up to the cabin with a pair of leathern saddle-bags swung over his arm, and a riding-whip in his hand.

Mrs. Leonard met him at the door, ready with a broom to sweep the snow from his boots.

"Oh! bother, never mind the snow. What of my patients, ha! drowned or froze to death, which?"

"They are both alive and comfortable, I think," said Mrs. Leonard, with the air of one who felt conscious of deserving praise, and meant to have it.

"What have you done for 'em, ha?"

"Rolled 'em in blankets before the fire at first; heated the bed with burnt sugar till it smoked again, and tucked 'em in."

"All right as if I'd been here myself; pure good sense, good sense. Mrs. Leonard, only what on earth did you send after me for?"

"It's best to be sure one is doing right, you know, doctor. Besides, the old man wouldn't have been contented without you, he thinks nobody don't know nothing that hasn't been to college: so just step in and let me shut the door. The young lady is in the next room; Amy is up stairs."

"I'll go to her first, poor girl!" said the doctor, "I mustn't let her suffer whatever comes of it. If your husband hadn't hurried on after young Arnold, I shouldn't have known that Amy was under the mill at all; the young chap only spoke of the French girl."

"Never mind about that jest now, doctor," said Mrs. Leonard, quickly, while she rattled the great iron tongs about the fire that Amy might not hear; "but just go in and see the young lady. I'll make a mug of hot flip agin you come out."

The doctor took his saddle-bags from behind the door, where he had placed them, and went into the inner room talking cheerfully.

Laura had been aroused from sleep by his entrance, for there was an outbreak of cheerfulness in his voice that carried an idea of

warmth with it. She looked out from among the blankets as he came in, and her eyes shone with pleasant astonishment; the grand symmetrical head; that voice, so full of genial intelligence; the brusque benevolence of his address, gave a glow to the heart that had hitherto rested like ice in her bosom: all unconsciously she smiled as the face beamed upon her.

"Well, my dear, and so you have had a ducking, eh! wonder you ever got out of that bottomless pit under the saw-mill. Narrow chance—narrow chance, I can tell you."

"I know it," said Laura, gratefully. "If the young lady, Miss Leonard, I mean, hadn't been courageous as a lion, and good as an angel, I must have perished!"

"Then it was Amy, my pet of 'pets, that got you out? Just like her—just like her—the goodness that is, but I'd no idea she had so much strength. So little Amy saved your life, my girl! Have you thanked God for that? Will you continue to thank Him all the days of your life?"

"I have only remembered to thank her as yet," said Laura, a little disturbed. "The shock was so great, the chill so cutting, I have hardly felt the power to think till your voice awoke me."

"Well, well, with life gratitude should come, and I dare say it will, for you seem a sensible girl, and it would have been a pity to have lost you under the ice. Cold yet, ha! give me your wrist."

Laura drew her delicate hand out from its shelter in the blankets, and laid it in the doctor's broad palm.

"Soft as a silk weed pod," he said, holding the hand in one palm, while he smoothed it down with the other tenderly, as if it had been a pet dove. "Never knew what it was to work, I dare say?"

"No," said Laura, smiling, "it is not necessary. I am only a useless, spoiled girl, doctor, with no one but my brother to love me very much."

"And, of course, no one to control you?" said the doctor.

"Control! oh! no, I shouldn't like that," said the girl, with an impatient movement of the head.

The doctor pressed her hand in his, shook it with an anxious sort of sympathy, exclaimed once or twice, "Poor thing! poor thing!" and then began his professional part of the visit in good earnest.

"Cold yet?"

"Not exactly; a shuddering sort of chill creeping through and through me, but not that horrible icy feel."

"Pain?"

"Not absolute pain, but—but vague aches, as if I had been bruised."

"Have no doubt, Mrs. Leonard."

"Well, doctor," cried the good woman, coming to the bed room door with a pair of red-hot tongs in her hand, which she had just drawn from the mug of hissing flip.

"Any wormwood in the house?"

"Wormwood? Whoever heard of a house without wormwood in it, not to say catnip, pennyroyal, and wild turnip? Of course I've got plenty of wormwood, doctor."

"Steep some in hot water then, and lay it all over this young lady's chest; put something warm to her feet; and then, my dear, go to sleep again, for that is all I can do just now."

"But when shall I be well enough to get up, doctor?"

"Well enough? Why to-morrow, I dare say. One good ducking shouldn't keep you in bed longer than that."

Laura turned her head contentedly on the pillow and closed her eyes. The doctor laid her hand softly into the bed, as he would have returned a bird to its nest, and went out smiling benignly as he entered the outer room.

"Here," said Mrs. Leonard, lifting a brown earthen mug foaming over with the drink she had been brewing, between both hands, and bearing it toward him, "here's a mug of flip that'll do your heart good, doctor."

Dr. Blake took the brown mug from her hands, looked into its depths with a smiling countenance, lifted it slowly to his mouth and drank. Slowly the bottom of the mug rose in sight, and then with a deep, deep sigh, mellow as the wind which sweeps over an orchard of ripe apples, he returned the mug to its level, and looked into Mrs. Leonard's face with a glance of sunny approval, that went to her heart.

"Capital flip, Miss Leonard. There isn't another woman in Norwich that could offer one a treat like that!"

"Supposing you take another drink," said Mrs. Leonard, coloring with honest vanity. "I've got the tongs heating agin, and can have a fresh mug ready before the old man comes in."

"Supposing I do!" said the doctor, eyeing the drink with a side glance, and shaking it gently in the mug before he lifted it to his moist lips again. "There, Mrs. Leonard, I feel like another man; don't forget to fill up for my friend Joshua, while I go to little Amy, a noble girl that, Mrs. Leonard—one in a thousand—gentle as a dove, and brave as a warrior. Some fine stuff in the young French girl yonder, but nothing to Amy! The ladder is quite safe, I suppose. Why didn't the child stay down stairs, there was room enough in the bed for two?"

"But Amy wanted to be alone. She didn't quite seem to take to her," said Mrs. Leonard, nodding her head toward the inner room.

"I understand," cried the doctor, looking over his shoulder as he mounted the rude steps; "natural enough too."

Amy was very white, and shivered painfully when the doctor came to her bed. There was a sort of wild terror in her eyes, which reminded him of a poor little rabbit that he had seen taken from a box trap that morning, whose soft glance was turned imploring on its captor. It seemed as if Amy were begging him to spare her, and he laughed at the idea; for the pretty little animal, whose only fault had been a love of sweet apples, seemed to him no more innocent than the young girl.

"And so, Amy, you have been in the mill-race, like a precious, darling little dunce, have you? Why, child, it's a miracle you ever came out—do you know that I've a great mind to keep you in bed a week for it? How can you look me in the face after such work?"

"I—I couldn't help it, doctor, it all happened before I had time to think. She was sinking, you know, and, and——"

"You jumped in, like a brave girl; I wouldn't have believed it of you, Amy Leonard."

"Oh! if you had seen her eyes, those great, wild eyes pleading upward! and her poor hands slipping away from the log. Indeed, indeed I could not help it."

"Couldn't help it? Of course you couldn't; but come, come let's see if you have been hurt by the wild leap: give me your hand!"

Amy reached out her little brown hand, which the doctor took with far more tender reverence than had marked his conduct with Laura. He felt the pulse, exclaiming,

"Child, what is this? your pulse beats like a

trip-hammer. Is it fever or fright? Why how this poor little hand shakes; don't take it away yet."

"Oh! I'm not sick, but sometimes my heart beats fast, and then, of course, the pulse rises. I only want a little sleep to be quite well, doctor. Say that to mother, or she'll be fretting about me."

"But you are not well, you tremble, and have fallen away. Your eyes are growing large; and, tell me, Amy, were you quite well before this happened?"

"Quite well, yes—I—I don't know!"

The doctor looked at her very gravely, and shook his head, at which she shrunk away and began to shiver again.

"This will never do," cried the doctor, "you are worse off a great deal than the young woman down stairs; your mother should have kept you there."

"No, no, I could not stay. She is strange, that young lady I mean, I could not breathe."

"Poor little fawn! how scared you look! Well, well, the young lady will be able to go home in the morning, and then we will have you down stairs, while I ransack the old saddle-bags for something that will make you strong."

"But I am strong."

"My fawn, you are no such thing, I must have a talk with your mother about it."

"Oh! doctor, this is cruel!" cried the poor girl, turning more and more pallid, while her eyes filled with tears.

"Cruel indeed! I only hope everybody will be as kind."

"But what do you wish to frighten mother for? I am well: how could I have held that young lady up in the water if I hadn't been strong?" pleaded the poor girl piteously.

"That's very true," answered the doctor, with the tone and manner of a person who yields without conviction. "To-morrow you will be down stairs, as smart as ever."

"Yes—yes," she answered, eagerly

"But I will drop in now and then, as I ride by the Falls, just to see how you get along."

"Yes!" The word came very faintly from those pale lips.

"So now good-bye," he said, pleasantly. "Keep your arms under the bed-clothes, and drink what I shall send you without making faces. Do you hear?"

"Yes, doctor."

Dr. Blake went down the steps backward, and thus entered the room where Mrs. Leonard was waiting.

"Well, doctor, has she got over the fright?"

"Oh! she'll do well enough," answered Dr. Blake, kneeling down by his saddle-bags, and preparing to open them. "Bring me a case-knife with a narrow point. That will answer. Now a scrap of paper—not very strong lately—the girl, I mean?"

"What? My Amy?"

"Yes, Amy. Touch of the high-po, now and then, ha?"

"Why yes," said the kind mother, drawing close to the doctor, as he measured some powders on the point of her case-knife, and folded them in tiny bits of paper. "Yes, she's been sort of down-hearted and good for nothing this six weeks, yet nothing really seems to be the matter; sort of feeble in the morning, nothing more."

"Oh! ailing in the morning, and a little restless after, I dare say."

"Jes so, doctor."

"Anxious and watching, as if she expected some one, or was afraid of something?"

"Yes, sort of fidgety."

"Starts when you speak to her suddenly?"

"Yes, that's jest it."

"Seems ready to burst out a-crying, once in awhile?"

"Yes, and does it, too."

"Especially if you speak very kindly to her?"

"That has puzzled me, doctor; she can't seem ter bear petting as she used ter."

"That will do," said the doctor, giving Mrs. Leonard the medicine, and buckling the straps of his saddle-bags. "Fine young woman in there, visiting at the Arnolds, I believe? Your daughter has been in New Haven; I suppose she saw young Arnold there?"

"Why I reckon so—of course. Why not?"

"Why not! Indeed he's a smart chap—too smart for these parts—above visiting his old friends, I dare say."

"Nothing of the sort, doctor," cried Mrs. Leonard, blushing in her eagerness to defend the young man. "He was up here the second night after he came home. Jest as friendly as ever."

"To see you and Joshua?"

"Why yes—he came to see us all, I reckon."

Dr. Blake swung the saddle-bags over his arm, and went out, rather abruptly, and with a cloud on his fine features. As he trotted off through the snow, the anxious expression grew deeper on his face.

"I wonder," he said, looking back upon the cabin, "I wonder if there has ever been a spot so remote that this one cause of heartache could

not penetrate it. So the young scoundrel dragged out the showy French girl, and left the little one to help herself—the hound!"

All unconsciously the doctor lashed out with his whip, which gave energy to his thought, and set his horse off into a floundering gallop, that flung a storm of snow all around him. Just then he met Benedict Arnold coming back in the little cutter at a rapid pace, with his mother muffled up in the furs by his side. The doctor's fingers tingled with their tight pressure on the whip handle as the cutter dashed toward him.

"Stop! son, stop!" cried Mrs. Arnold, laying her hand on the reins, which her son handled with jockey-like ability. "Here is the doctor!"

Arnold drew his horse up with a sudden crash of the bells, and his mother called out, in her sweet, low voice,

"Doctor! doctor! How are they? Is there any danger?"

The doctor drew his horse close by the cutter, and, without looking at Arnold, addressed his mother.

"Not if they are left in peace, Mrs. Arnold; but you must not go up there now."

"But—but they will want care, and my son is so anxious. I could hardly persuade him to stay at home long enough to change his wet clothes."

"Anxious! what about?" cried the doctor, looking full at the young man. "Is it the French girl, with her frillery and her airs; or Amy Leonard, the poor girl whom he left to sink or swim as she could?"

"I am responsible to you neither for my actions nor my feelings, Dr. Blake," said Arnold, insolently.

"But you will be responsible to God for this day's work, young man, and for that of many another day that has gone before," said the doctor, with a sternness that was almost solemn.

Arnold did not speak at once, but quick rage flamed into his eyes, and left his quivering lips pale as the snow that lay around him. He lifted the long whip, as if to lash at the doctor, but curved his hand promptly, broke into a defiant laugh, and the blow fell with stinging violence on the spirited horse attached to the cutter. The horse gave a wild leap sideways; and then the ferocious courage of the young man broke forth with brutal violence: drawing the reins tight with one hand, he stood up, and the long lash curled and quivered like a snake around the generous beast, who reared, plunged, and fought against the strain upon his mouth,

till his limbs shook, and drops of blood fell from his torn lips upon the snow. Still, such was the strength of anger in the young man, that he held the animal firmly, rave and tear as he would. Mrs. Arnold grew pale in the face of this brutal strife, and now and then cried out in a plaintive way,

"Benedict! Oh! Benedict, don't!" which her son heeded no more than a tempest stops to hear the whispered complaint of a snow-drop.

At last the horse stood, tamed and trembling, in his tracks; then Arnold turned fiercely on the doctor, and demanded what he meant by attempting to stop them on the way.

Dr. Blake, who had been gravely watching the contest between the poor brute and the brutal man, simply replied, that the strange young lady had good nursing, and was getting along well—so well that he did not wish her disturbed, even by her friends, who could not fail to be in the way in a small house already overfull. The doctor looked at Mrs. Arnold as he spoke; and she, in her gentle way which had a kind of sweet authority in it, said at once that it was best to return home; for the world she would not intrude herself into neighbor Leonard's house, unless she could be of use.

This decision, gently as it was given, Arnold was obliged to respect; for his mother had yet a strong influence over his wayward nature: so, wheeling the horse, he drove sullenly back, without a word or bow for the doctor.

Mrs. Arnold looked back, and bowed two or three times, as if to atone for this rudeness, at which the doctor muttered,

"Poor woman! unhappy mother! there is deeper sorrow for you yet."

With these words the good man turned into a cross-road which led to another patient, ruminating as he trotted along upon the cases he had left behind in the log cabin.

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## CHAPTER XI.

WHEN Mr. Arnold's double sleigh drove up to the farm-house the next morning, the whole family gathered at the front door to receive the guest, now rendered doubly interesting from her recent peril. She was subdued and pale, not so much from illness, it would seem, as from the chastening reflections that sprung out of the great peril she had been in, and a deeply grateful feeling toward those who had saved her from it. There was no more coquetry in her manner to Arnold now; with delicate and touching humility she had leaned upon his arm, and

permitted him almost to carry her from the cabin, though Paul stood by, ready to perform this brotherly office. She smiled gratefully, as Arnold's hands gathered the furs around her and held them in place with his circling arm. She was so thankful for life—so glad to flee from that black ravenous vortex of waters, where death had seemed dragging her down and engulfing her in terrible darkness. An intense love of life, of her own personality, had seized upon her, with the first realization of what death was. She clasped her rosy palms together under the fur, with a sort of ecstasy, rejoicing in the warmth, and shuddering to think how cold and dark they might have been, weltering under those logs. Now and then she would lift one hand to her hair and smile to think that it was dry—that the horrible dripping of those icy water drops had ceased forever. All the night long, while lying in Leonard's cabin, she had thought of herself only as dead, and sunken under the mill, with the black waters rippling through her hair, and her frozen limbs floating up and down in the dark eddies. The picture would not leave her; and the Falls, which grew louder and louder after midnight, seemed to be rushing wildly that way to overwhelm her again. But she was in the sunshine now. The clear, bracing air made her strong again. She was fleeing from all thoughts of death into the broad light of heaven. The winter's sun blessed her as it shimmered down upon the snow. The sleigh-bells sounded like a jubilee. The heart was brimful of thankfulness, but alas! that warm heart turned in its gratitude rather to the man at her side than to the good God to whom the firstlings of every human soul are due.

When she reached the farm house and saw the whole family coming forth to meet her, tears of gratitude swelled into Laura's eyes, and she stood upon the threshold stone a moment, returning the soft kisses of the mother and of gentle Hannah Arnold, with a voice of thanksgiving whispering sweetly at her heart.

The family began to love her after this. With so much of her outward finery swept off in the mill-race, she was obliged to depend on Hannah, not only for her outer garments, but for the dainty little hat, turned up in front and behind, which looked coquettish on her, when it only proved modestly becoming to its owner.

These household garments, provided for her out of Hannah's little stock, brought the strange girl more completely into the bosom of the family; it seemed natural to love her when she appeared like one of themselves. Then Hannah

had her own secret reasons for a generous access of affection. Was not Laura Paul's sister? and—and?—The young girl was alone when these thoughts came into her head; but she blushed crimson nevertheless, and looked shyly around, as if some one could hear her heart beating and guess the cause.

Several days passed, and still these guests remained at the homestead, notwithstanding the restless impatience of Arnold, who was almost inhospitable in his haste to be off. Laura was well now, and rosy with happiness, but she would not leave the place while one of her preservers suffered, and Amy Leonard was very ill. The shock and cold had settled on her frail being. Dr. Blake gave no opinion, but his brow clouded darker and darker every time he rode away from the cabin.

All the Arnold family went to the Falls; but no one was admitted to Amy's room except Mrs. Arnold, who came out crying; for the young girl only turned away her head, when she entered, and closed her eyes; but one tear after another rolled from under the white lids, and the good woman felt in her heart that the sources of those tears were such as she could not question without condemning her own son. So with many mournful regrets she went home, heart-stricken, as if the guilt of that abandonment had been hers, and resolving—the gentle Christian—to talk still more earnestly to Benedict, and plead her young friend's cause.

No, not the whole Arnold family. I am mistaken there. It was only the females who went to the cabin; but Mr. Arnold, the elder, drove them to the Falls; and, while the ladies penetrated to the room adjoining that in which Amy lay, he went down to the saw-mill, and found Leonard busy among his timbers.

In former years there had been great intimacy between these two men; but of late Arnold had sought associates more congenial to his habits, and they had become almost strangers. There was nothing of Arnold's former manner as he approached his old friend, who came gravely forward to meet him. Formerly, when he had been the richer and more prosperous man, his approach might have had something of patronage about it; but now he seemed shy and doubtful of a warm reception.

It was painful to see a man, really superior, with that down look—a look that had sprung out of conscious self-degradation. He hesitated, cast anxious glances at the mill-tender, and once turned away, as if tempted to walk toward the Falls. But Leonard's heart warmed toward his old friend, and he called him back.

"Ho! neighbor Arnold, don't turn your back on friends. Come in, come in! It isn't often one gets a chat while the saw is going. After all, it's a lonesome place up here, so, while the women folks make a little visit, supposing we sit down and talk over old times."

Arnold's hand always trembled now, but it shook like a dead leaf as Leonard grasped it. He brushed the other hand across his face with a hasty movement, complaining that the cold brought the water to his eyes; and then Leonard's heart smote him that he had kept so completely away from a man who had been a member of the same church with him, and, in more than the Christian sense, almost like a brother. So all the friendship came gushing in a glow over his honest face, and shaking the hand in his grasp most heartily, he broke out in the old way,

"How do you do, brother? I'm right glad to see you at the mill."

Arnold gave one grasp of the hand that shook his, struggled against something in his throat an instant; and then, fairly turning his back, walked off toward that end of the mill which looked toward the Falls. One or two great sobs broke from him, and then he went slowly back, trying to look unconcerned.

"I haven't seen the Falls since this mill was put up, it seems to me; but we had a grand raising that day, anyhow."

"Yes, and a prayer-meeting after it that none of us ought to forget."

"I never shall forget it," said Arnold, with a quick turn of the eye. "It was the last one I ever went to—the last time I ever made a prayer out loud."

"Yes, yes, I remember the prayer, brother. The Lord was with us that night," said Leonard, kindling up. "You asked him to bless the work our hands had done in the day, and he did bless it. That prayer-meeting was a glorious house-warming. It was like taking up one's abode in a sanctuary, when the old woman and little Amy went to bed in the cabin for the first time."

Arnold's face began to quiver; holy memories were unfolding, like bird-wings, in his bosom.

"They were pleasant times, Leonard; our children were young and innocent; we had strength and faith in those days."

"And will they never come back, brother? The same merciful God rules over us just the same as then."

Arnold shook his head, and, as if to escape the closeness of the subject, began to examine the timbers of the mill.

"They have stood the weather famously," he said, "for, after all, it is an old mill."

"Oh! not so very bad for that; it was raised within a few days of the time your store was burnt down. Don't you remember?"

Arnold gave a start, and the unhealthy red left his face. "Don't—don't, I can't bear to think of that—it was—it was a——"

"A great trouble I know, brother Arnold; but you got the insurance money, and that ought to have kept you a-going."

"Yes, I—we got the money, but I—I was worn out, you know, and it's hard to begin life agin arter a fire like that. Such things take all the courage out of a man, Leonard. You wouldn't blame me if—if——"

The poor man sat down on a log that lay ready for the saw, and wiped the great drops of perspiration that had begun to gather on his forehead the moment this subject of the fire came up.

"Why, brother, I didn't think you took that one piece of bad luck so much to heart."

"Oh! it's over now; but I come to say something about our children, about Amy and Benedict."

Leonard's face darkened, and a look of distress came over it.

"The poor gal is sick," he said, "she was left in the cold water till the other could be dragged out. I was jest in time to save her dear life, brother, and no more. It's a'most too tough to see that foreign gal a-going about fresh as a rose, while Amy lies there moaning her life out."

"Is Amy sick as that? Poor gal—poor gal! I remember her when she wasn't more'n so high. I've watched her growing up to the harnsome creature she is now. It's hard to know that she must have sickness and trouble like the rest of us, Leonard, very hard, and I want to save her from more, that's why I'm here, old friend."

"What is all this about?" said Leonard, wondering at the agitation which was evident in these rapid words. "What harm threatens Amy more than has happened already?"

Arnold folded his trembling hands over each other again and again, looked to the right and left, as if tempted to run away and leave a painful task half done. At last he faltered out,

"Leonard, tell me, has my son, Benedict, been about the Falls much of late years, that is, since little Amy's been old enough to care about such things? I've been in a sort of dream, a long, long dream, and hadn't a chance to find out for myself; but you are careful, always at home, you have kept your senses,



Leonard. I don't like to ask anybody else, but you can tell me, are the young folks fond of one another?"

"They ought to be: and why not?" said the father, sternly; for he fancied that Arnold, with some of the old pride, was about to protest against his sweet daughter as a fit wife for his more prosperous son.

"Because," said Arnold, with an effort that made him shake from head to foot—"because he mustn't have her!"

"You say that to me, bro—Mr. Arnold? If it wasn't for the fear of God I'd——"

"Don't—don't take it in that way, it's all for her good I speak. She's too young—too tender—a little spring lamb that ought to be fed with white clover, and nothing else. He mustn't have her!"

"What do you mean, old friend?" said Leonard, feeling that however strange all this might be, no offence was intended to him or his child. "I hope, as a Christian—I hope you have not been—that is you—you are all right, Arnold."

The poor man shrunk into himself at this insinuation, vague as it was. He swallowed once or twice as if sobs were swelling to his throat, and then he spoke in a voice so broken with sorrow, that it went like a prayer to his brother's heart.

"It's a cruel thing to undertake—it's unnatural, but I don't want to drag anybody else down with me, least of all you or yours. I don't know how far this thing has gone, Leonard, but don't let my son—he's my only son, you know, and that makes it worse—don't let him marry your darter, I charge you—I warn you don't let him marry your child. I won't stand by and see it done, for it'd be a sinful thing."

"Why would it be sinful?" demanded Leonard, struck by the passion of distress with which all this was spoken.

"Because your child is innocent; and mine—oh! God, help me—mine is not."

The unhappy man fell back to the log from which he had risen, and, clasping his hands, began to cry piteously.

"Don't—don't ask me any more; I've done my duty, and you see how I am. You haven't a drink of something in the mill, just to give me a little strength? I wouldn't take a drop this morning, but it came harder than I expected. When a thing has taken root down in the darkness of your soul, it makes one tremble to pull it up. It's to save you from trouble I did it. Leonard, so don't be hard on me."

"I know you are in earnest, and think there

is good reason for this warning, Arnold. But what if the trouble is upon us?—what if she loves him as our wives loved us before we married them?"

"But she mustn't—indeed she mustn't! Let him fall in love with that French girl, I shan't trouble myself to warn her; but little Amy, I couldn't see Amy carried off in that way, she's like my own darter. Now do remember that I warn you—words that make a father's heart ache as mine does now should be listened to, and minded, mark that, minded!"

"I will listen to them—without asking another question I will respect the warning. If he comes here again, I will take this thing in hand."

"That's right—that's right; but be firm, don't let him find you wavering like his poor old father. Be firm!"

"I will!"

"As a rock?—as a rock?"

"I will lean upon the rock of ages!" said Leonard, reverently.

"Oh! if I had something to lean on," cried Arnold, clasping his hands; but the next minute they trembled apart again.

"You have, old friend," and Leonard took both the trembling hands in his. "The same God that answered us once will listen again. You asked for drink to give you strength just now; let us ask for something better than that, brother, let us pray together."

"Me—me pray?" faltered the old man.

That instant the saw had traveled its course down the log and stopped. The sudden stillness fell upon the old man like a shock; he looked strangely around, muttering,

"Me—me, and here?"

"Come," said Leonard, taking him lovingly by the arm, "come, old friend, let us go away, you and I together, as we have done a hundred times before, let us go to the right place for strength and courage. This way—this way. Never fear!"

They trod a little footpath together, the strong man leading the weak, till they found a shelf of rock overlooking the Falls, and hedged in by evergreens on all sides but that which faced on the water, which sung an anthem around them that made the spot like a chapel. Leonard knelt down on the snow that crusted the rock: it was not his habit to kneel for prayer, but just then his soul was full of devotion, and, before he knew it, the good man bent himself to the earth, even as the Saviour bowed when the most terrible of all sorrows fell upon him.

Prayer was the great outburst of eloquence

in those days—the best gifts that a man possessed were offered to his God. I do not know that Leonard possessed any great wealth of words or ideas, but his whole being was alive with one purpose, and faith turned every thought that sprang to his lips into eloquence. Up through the clear winter morning rose the voice of that prayer, above the anthem of the waves, above the winds that whispered continually in the evergreens, above the sobs of that feeble man, who kept his face bowed to the earth, and shrunk together with shame while the other prayed.

But there is mighty strength in a good heart really inspired! Never—to use Joshua Leonard's own words—had his soul taken such hold on the throne of God; he literally wrestled with the angels for that poor drooping life at his side. The powerful words that burned on his lips at last kindled gleams of the old faith in Arnold. His head was slowly lifted, his shrunken shoulders grew broader, the crouching attitude changed; then his face was turned heavenward, and the bright sun fell like a glory upon it. The old nature was giving way; he had no words for prayer, but when a warm and more ardent rush of faith came from Leonard, a single "Amen" broke up all the ice at his heart, and a shower of warm tears rained over his upturned face. Those penitent tears—angels might have crowned themselves with such drops, and still been all heavenly.

## CHAPTER XII.

AFTER the morning when Arnold became acquainted with his father's frailty, he had dared to despise the old man in his heart—dared to let this unnatural contempt be manifest in his manner, if not in words, so that a new cause of separation had sprung up between them, which threatened to grow wider and wider. The father had not felt this so keenly till after his visit to the saw-mill, for, when he felt the pain of these things, there was the liquor-case to flee to, and that deadened sensibility if it could do no more. But after that day, all that was sensitive and refined in his nature took sharpness and force. With his system all deranged and his nerves unstrung, he had taken a solemn resolution which was sure to shake his physical being to the centre. He was a broken-down man, and habits, that had preyed upon him like wolves, were sure to turn and rend him as he refused them food. A little kindness at this time, a look even of respectful sympathy from the son he could not help looking up to in many respects, would have aided him

greatly in the terrible battle of appetite against principle that lay before him.

But Benedict Arnold was a man incapable of repentance; a strong, hard character, who never had and never could believe himself in the wrong. His own iron will was the only law he recognized, and the greatest sin that any of his fellow-men could commit was to oppose that will. Perhaps, he was lifted above petty sins, because they were not the best aids to selfish ambition. He was a man to commit crimes, not drop into foibles; a man of iron, with nerves of steel, that vibrated only to his ruling passion.

From this character, with all the fiery passions of youth inflaming his selfishness, what had the poor father to hope?

Two days after his visit to the mill, the old man went into the parlor where Benedict was sitting with Laura De Montreuil, who had been thoughtful and languid, but gentle as an infant since her accident. There was no more badinage, no coquetry in her intercourse with young Arnold now. The pride had been all broken from her heart in those cold waters, and a light word would have been sacrilege to her gratitude. It was her duty to worship him—a sweet duty, to which she submitted herself without stint or pretext.

Arnold kept half aloof, both from her gratitude and her love. He did not evade or tease her as formerly; but no engagement, not even a declaration had passed his lips. Yet she was content from the very wealth of her own feeling, and she would whisper to herself again and again, "Surely I could not love him so entirely if he were indifferent—it is not in my nature." This unexacting state of mind pleased the young man; there was no longer a necessity to be on the defensive, to skirmish around a declaration which he was resolved not to make at that time, or in that place, but which it had seemed almost impossible to avoid. It was pleasant to sit by her side hour after hour, and witness the utter subjection which love had made of her pride, to hear it in the soft tones of her voice, and read it in the timid glances of her eyes, for an all absorbing vanity formed the leading trait in his ambitious character.

Laura had been more than usually gentle that morning, and Arnold's self-love was gratified to the full. It was a triumph to have so completely subdued this spirited young creature by an act of simple courage, which cost him nothing, for many a time in his boyhood had he clung to the great water-wheel at the Falls, and been dashed now into the waves, then lifted

high into the sunshine, for the mischievous excitement of the exploit alone. Still admiration was not the less acceptable to him because it was undeserved; Arnold had no sensitiveness of that sort to contend against during his whole life.

But the entrance of old Mr. Arnold was a shock to these complacent feelings. He had only come to seek Hannah, and not finding her was about to go away. The first terrible effects of total abstinence were gnawing at his vitals, and he staggered in his walk, glancing wildly around, disturbed by his son's look and voice; when he rose from Laura's side, and sharply demanded what was wanted, plainly showing the old man that he was considered an intruder in his own sitting-room.

This question and the unfilial gesture of the young man gave the poor father a shock, under which he broke down altogether. A trembling fit seized him, and, holding out his hands, as if to ward off a blow, he cried out,

"Don't! Oh! my son, don't!"

Laura started up; she was painfully surprised by the scene, and the distress in the old man's face. The tears that gushed up to his eyes went to her heart. But before she could speak, Arnold strode across the room, laid a heavy hand on his father's shoulder, and thrust him through the open door into the kitchen. As he closed the door and returned to the room, it was easy to see the unfavorable impression this scene had left on the mind of his guest. She was very pale, and her eyes shone with indignation.

"How could you, *mon dieu*?—how could you speak so harshly to the kind, old man? It will break his heart," cried the brave girl.

"You don't understand. He had no right to appear before my guests in that state," said Arnold, impetuously; "I will allow no man, father or not, to degrade me in this way."

Laura moved a step forward with the old imperious air; her eyes glittered with tears as she turned them on Arnold.

"I am sorry, very sorry for your father, Mr. Arnold; he seems ill, if you refuse to go and comfort him I must."

Arnold colored violently under this rebuke. He really believed his father to have been drinking, and wounded pride had stung him into the brutal act, which the woman, whom he looked upon as his worshiper a moment before, had so pointedly condemned.

"You cannot understand, mademoiselle. Every house has its skeleton; you have unfortunately obtained a rude glimpse of ours."

Laura smiled painfully and shook her head, singing,

"Go—go out and beg his pardon, Arnold."

"What, I?"

"Yes; you are brave—be generous—be just. This scene disturbs my idea of your character, and I cannot bear that. Everything about you seemed grand a moment ago."

Arnold's vanity was touched; he, also, could not bear that anything should check the idolatry of her regard. He kissed her hand, whispered that she was an angel, and went out, not to apologize, but to upbraid the unhappy father, whose state of moral and physical depression was pitiable.

"Father, how dare you come in that room when you could not walk for staggering?" whispered the young man, through his shut teeth, bending close to the stooping figure that sat heavily by the fire, with great tears rolling down his face. "How dare you?"

The old man lifted his head, and looked sorrowfully into the flushed face bending over him.

"I—I didn't mean to mortify you, Ben."

"You have done nothing but mortify me since I came home," whispered his son, fiercely.

"Couldn't you keep sober one week?"

The old man winced.

"I am sober now, Ben, and that's what makes me seem as if I wasn't. It's three days since I've tasted a drop of anything stronger than coffee."

"Then what makes you stagger in this way?"

"It's because of the craving want; because—oh! my God! my God! help me, help me, for this is more than I can bear!"

"Hush!" commanded the son; "do you wish to disturb our visitors?"

"No, no; I will disturb nobody, if I can help it. Leave me alone, Benedict; it's hard to fight this battle all by one's self. Don't make it worse, for God's sake! Have mercy on me; I am weak enough! Do let me try and hold out! It's hard—it's hard!"

"This is unbearable! Can't you be a man, sir?"

"A man? Well, yes; I—I am trying. Half the night I was on my knees, in the cold barn, praying God to help me be a man once more—out in the barn, remember; for I didn't want to disturb any one, and crept away alone. I dropped the key of the liquor-case into the well, as I went along, for it seemed to hold me down like a chain. That key might have been ten thousand weight of iron dragging at me, but I flung it down, down, down!"

"This is delirium; you have reached the last

stage of a drunkard's life, sir! Why, every nerve and muscle in your frame is quivering. What use can there be in talking to a man who doesn't know what he is saying?"

"My son—oh! Benedict, this is hard! Don't say it again! No wonder I tremble! The devil tempting me every step I take—mocking at me when I try to pray—taking all my strength when I walk—tugging at my heart like a wolf, and crying out, drink! drink! when I sit down to rest. And now you come—you, my only son, that I was so proud of once—that I never refused anything to in my whole life—you—you! Oh! Benedict, this is tough!"

"I tell you, sir, this raving will be heard! If you cannot command yourself I will leave the house this night and forever."

"You, Ben, you? If you had never left it, I had not come to this! But don't say that now; you don't understand how hard it is to stifle this craving. It makes me talk wild; but it isn't drink that does it—that would make me quiet."

"Then, for heaven's sake, drink! Anything is better than this state!"

The father shook the hand from his shoulder, and stood up, firm and strong, like a man.

"So Satan comes in the form of my own son with his temptations! This is horrible!"

He spoke loud and full; the force of his rebuking eye, wild as it was, startled the young man.

"Hush! father, hush! She will hear you!"

"Hear me denounce my own son? No human being shall ever hear that. Nothing but God and my own soul knows anything about it."

"About what, sir?"

"How it was I began to—to drink. That is what I mean. How it was that I lost a hold on all that makes a man strong. There was cause, when a father's conscience goes against his heart—when justice calls him one way and love another—when——"

"Once more, sir, what does this mean?" whispered Arnold, clenching his teeth again.

"Stoop down here, Benedict, close, close! You are sure Hagar is out?—no one within hearing?—you will know then?"

"Yes, yes!"

"Closer, closer! You remember that night—closer——"

The rest of the sentence was whispered close in Benedict Arnold's ear. He turned deadly pale; but clutched his hand on the old man's shoulder, whispering,

"Never breathe those words again, to God or man!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## "THAT OLD WOMAN."

BY MRS. H. S. GROSVENOR.

"I DECLARE!" exclaimed Josephine Ainsworth, in a tone of mingled scorn and chagrin, "it is too bad. I have been longing for a call from Mrs. Norton and her sister, and when they at last made their appearance, after waiting until I thought they never meant to come, who should be here but that old Mrs. Denham, with her out-of-date bonnet and everlasting black dress? It made me wish dress, bonnet, and wearer, all frozen up at the North Pole together. What could Mrs. Norton think when she found such a piece of antiquity in our parlor?"

"Nothing to your disparagement, or mine either, I trust," replied Mrs. Ainsworth, in a calm voice, quite unlike her daughter's vehement tone. "I hope I shall never have more occasion to blush for a guest than I had this morning for Mrs. Denham."

"Did you notice her bonnet?" inquired Josephine. "It was velvet, to be sure, but anybody with half an eye could see it was all of two years behind the times. The cloak was worse still, and I kept thinking the old lady might make her fortune, if she would only pretend Rose Standish wore it when she first set foot on Plymouth Rock. Nobody would presume to doubt such a reasonable story."

"I never thought of her cloak or bonnet," was Mrs. Ainsworth's answer. "I was wholly engrossed by her conversation, which, if I mistake not, was far more elevated in sentiment, and quite as correct in expression as your admired Mrs. Norton."

"That was another thing which vexed me," rejoined Josephine, with increasing irritation. "You were more attentive to that old woman, whom nobody knows, and nobody cares for, than to the elegant and fashionable Mrs. Norton. I wish Mrs. Denham would keep out of my sight for the next ten years. She recognized me in the street yesterday, and then Agnes Fortescue asked me where I picked up such a regular antediluvian?"

"How long do you wish to live, Josephine?" inquired Mr. Torrey, Mrs. Ainsworth's bachelor brother, when his niece paused fairly out of breath.

Perhaps the query suggested thoughts more  
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serious in character than often visited the gay girl, for she hesitated before replying. "Until I have seen everything worth seeing, and enjoyed everything worth enjoying," were the words that at length found utterance. "It will take a long time to do that," she added, in a lighter tone, "and I think I shall be willing to die when all that makes life desirable is gone."

Mr. Torrey and his niece were sitting together when the twilight shadows deepened. This is an hour dear to the contemplative heart; the hour for sad regrets, new resolves, quiet communings with the past, and unseen questionings of the future. Mr. Torrey's thoughts went backward, traveling again the vista of by-gone years, and in the changing firelight that alternately gleamed and flickered on the wall, he saw a type of life with its varying gloom and brightness. Josephine, in the meantime, wholly occupied by a prospective party, was engaged in considering what style of dress would be most in harmony with her figure and complexion. Each color of the rainbow was summoned for separate review: curls and braids, ribbons, feathers, and flowers, were in turn the subject of mental deliberation, the busy mind quite forgetting its higher destiny as a creature of immortality?

"Josephine," said Mr. Torrey, suddenly interrupting this train of thought, "have you heard your mother speak of her early friend, Grace Hamilton?"

"I have no recollection of the name," was the response. "Who was she, uncle?"

"A very lovely girl whom I knew when I was younger than I am now," he resumed. "One of the few who possess beauty of features and symmetry of form combined with manners at once winning, dignified, and unaffected. Add to these attractions a warm, loving, sympathizing heart, and rare intellectual endowments, and you have some faint conception of Grace Hamilton in her dawning womanhood. As you may imagine, such a sweet blossom did not blush unseen or unsought. At one time it was reported that she was plighted to Frank Lindsey, son of the envied millionaire; and again Gerald Spencer, less wealthy than the former, but belonging to a more aristocratic family, was said to have won the prize. Both these rumors

proved incorrect, as she married one who possessed no advantages of wealth or position; a highly cultivated intellect, and a heart strong in the love and practice of the right, being his only treasures.

"I often saw Grace and her husband after their marriage, and when I marked their perfect union of thought, interest, and affection, I fancied that the bliss once known in the sinless bowers of Eden had returned again to gladden our darkened world. Their parlor was always tastefully arranged, Grace invariably had a cheerful face, and the formerly reserved Edward became social and hospitable, as if wishing to shed around him a portion of the sunlight that glowed in his own heart.

"'I am afraid we are too happy,' said Grace, as I was spending an evening by their fireside, according to my frequent custom. 'I have been making calls all the afternoon,' she continued, 'and instead of envying Mrs. Lindsey's new house, or Mrs. Spencer's obsequious servants, I returned thanking God for my quiet life. My own home seems a peaceful ark of refuge.'

"'The lines are fallen to us in pleasant places, yea, we have a goodly heritage,' responded her husband; and when Grace led her little boy toward him for a good night kiss, he folded mother and child to his heart in a loving embrace. 'She deserves to be happy,' he said, when Grace had gone up stairs with the little one; 'I believe she is the best wife in the world. I thought I loved her,' he continued, with deep feeling, 'when we were married, but there are no words in the language strong enough to express my devotion to her now. Our hearts have grown together with the lapse of years, twining around and into each other, until they have become indissolubly one. Sometimes I inquire what would become of either if the other part were rent away;' and as he spoke thus, though he was habitually a man of self-control, tears filled his eyes, and a tremor shook his frame.

"This conversation with its attendant circumstances is impressed upon my mind by the sad events that soon followed. A few days subsequent, I was startled by the intelligence that Edward was dying, or, it might be, already dead. I hurried to the home where I had been often greeted by his tones of welcome, only to look upon his lifeless form, from which the spirit had passed with scarcely a moment's warning. He lay on the bed, pale, silent, motionless; the smile that still lingered around his lips being the only thing which looked like life. Thank God, death could not take away that smile, the signet of eternal blessedness."

"Poor Grace, where was she?" interrogated Josephine, when her uncle paused overcome by thronging memories.

"By her husband's side, almost as pale and motionless as himself. Those who knew her expected a violent outburst of grief, but such agony as hers is too deep for tears and lamentations. Though light sorrow may be assuaged by outward utterance, there is an anguish when the soul veils itself in silence, and God alone sees the intensity of suffering within. Grace was in this state, and when her pastor knelt by the dead, beseeching our Father to comfort His stricken child; or when kind friends whispered words of sympathy, their tears falling all the while like rain, she heard them like one stunned and unconscious.

"It is difficult to imagine a more complete change, both in the inward and outward current of life, than this bereavement produced in that of Grace. Nurtured tenderly in her early home, it had been Edward's delight to surround her with the means of enjoyment particularly pleasing to a refined and cultivated taste. Her comfort had been considered in every household arrangement, while of the petty details of business, his loving care had kept her ignorant as a child. This was ill-judged affection, for the flower too tenderly sheltered bows before the first blast, with its petals crushed and its tendrils trailing in the dust.

"Grace was soon roused from the lethargy of grief by the necessity which compelled her to take thought for the future. Creditors presented their claims; her child must be fed and clothed; and now there was no strong arm to come between her and these exigencies. Like a true woman, she scorned to be a burden to others. Accordingly, refusing all pecuniary aid, she left her home with its sweet and sad associations, parted with furniture, each article of which was linked with some fond remembrance, and, looking to the widow's God alone for help, commenced her struggle with adversity. The following years were years of trial. Patient labor, meek endurance, and uncomplaining self-denial—much as has been written on these themes, how much still remains to be recorded!

"One bright spot, however, gilded her life's page. Her child was a lad of much loveliness of character, possessing mental endowments beyond his years. To train him for a position of honor and usefulness, was an object for which she concentrated all her energies. She ate plainer food, wore coarser garments, labored when she needed rest, for the sake of supplying him with books and teachers.

"As time passed, awakening in the heart of the child the deeper thought and loftier purpose of approaching manhood, the disease which blights many buds of promise set its seal on the widow's son. 'How can I give thee up?' was the cry that burst from her agonized heart, and she prayed as Jesus did in the garden when He sweat great drops of blood, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' Blame her not if it was long before she could add, 'Not my will, but Thine be done.'

"The blow came, and Grace stood alone amid her graves, a childless widow. The wintry sky bent frowningly above her, the earth was hard and frozen under her feet, and the bleak desolation of nature was an emblem of her chilled, desolated heart. Pecuniary resources were exhausted by her son's protracted illness, and the combined weight of poverty and bereavement was almost too much to be borne."

"Where were her friends?" interrogated Josephine. "They certainly would not be so unfeeling as to let her suffer."

"Her parents had long been dead," was the response; "her only brother had removed to a distant home, and immediately around her a new generation had arisen, who, like the Egyptian king of former days, knew not Joseph. More than one home was thrown open to her, but she nobly refused to accept its shelter, saying that charity was for the infirm and helpless, and not for those who had health and strength to labor."

"Not long after her last bereavement, one who had loved her when she was the young and admired Grace Hamilton, and who, for the memory of that early love, trod a lonely path in life, offered his hand and fortune to her acceptance. 'My affections are buried in the grave of husband and child,' she replied, 'and I would not wrong you by giving you only the shattered wreck of a heart. Henceforth I shall live alone for God, and the cup that my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?' Though he did

not press his claim, he felt that Grace Hamilton, in her unchanging devotion to the dead, and her holy trust in God, was infinitely more lovely than she had been when in the full glow of youthful beauty.

"Since this time she has led a life of humble usefulness, unseen by the gay world in which she was once the brightest star, yet not unnoticed by the Father whose loving eye is upon His lowliest child. Rightly believing that no employment is degrading which promotes the well-being of others, she has always found something to do, and consequently means of subsistence."

"Such is her outward life, but of the inward we cannot speak. Who can number the tears shed in secret, the heart-yearnings for the loved and lost, or the utter emptiness which she finds in all early things? Purified by much suffering, like gold that has been tried in the furnace, she is daily becoming more meet for an inheritance with the saints in light. I have been privileged with the friendship of many choice spirits, yet I never met with one who shed so much of heaven in the atmosphere which she breathes. I always feel more earnest to discharge duty, more willing to bear trials, more charitable toward my brother man, and more submissive to my Father, God, after an hour spent in her society."

"She is living then?" remarked Josephine. "I wish I knew her," she thoughtfully added. "Perhaps she might make one better, and I am sure I need improving."

"You do know her, my dear niece," was the impressive rejoinder. "That old woman whose obsolete cloak and bonnet annoyed you so much, is the Grace Hamilton whose history I have been relating. There are thousands like her, Josephine; patient, suffering women, clad in the vestments of toil and privation, meekly bearing the burdens of this life, whom the gay and thoughtless pass by with scorn. But the Father beholds them in love, and when He makes up His jewels, some of these despised and neglected ones will be the brightest gems in His crown."

## THE BURNHAMS OF BOSCAWEN PLAIN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SUSY L——'S DIARY."

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1860, by Charles J. Peterson, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 215.

### CHAPTER XXII.

*Florence Water-Cure, September 18th.*

"I ought to go away on with you; I know that as well as anybody; but I can't!" said Roosevelt, standing before me at the Springfield station. "I can't stand it! I'm weaker than a woman; but I can't help it. If I just turn my face that way," making an inclination of his head toward Northampton, "it actually seems to me that a fierce heat comes pouring over me. When my back is turned, I can get along. I didn't know it before; but there's the difference of a coat of mail, I find, between a man's face and his shoulders; and if I can get into the cars, my back this way, and going farther off at the rate of twenty miles an hour, this is all I ask. Ain't I brave?"

I smiled, looking in his face, his face that is wistful and sincere as a little child's; and he went on: "You can't help seeing what a coward I am. But I was *made* so. I was never made for a hero; although I suppose I was made to be——"

"To be a good, sincere, truthful man," interposed I, when he hesitated; "to be strong, free, fearless in the truth. In nothing else can a man like you be strong. Your face shows it. It isn't a face to grow hard, immovable, because your intellect is mighty to control it and all things, or because you have insensibility, or recklessness toward life. You don't appreciate yourself adequately; you don't know how great and happy you can be; this is the trouble. I wish you could see!"

"I can see sometimes. I did just now as you spoke, and it was like looking in, on a hot summer day, to where green shade and cool fountains are; but I see, the next minute, what I must do before I can go in, and it discourages me. I'm afraid of the world. I believe I shall be till I die; so, pity me till I die. If the time comes that you can't know me, don't be done with pitying me. But," he added, drawing himself up, looking about him as if to come out of his emotion, "I suppose it is almost time. Yes," looking at his watch, "in fifteen minutes you'll go: in twenty minutes I shall go. I like the looks of

the woman they've sent." She was an elderly, fat woman, dressed with propriety, and bearing a good-natured, motherly air about her. She sat near us, eating an apple, telling a young mother what to do for her child's eruption. "Don't let it taste pork," she was saying when we listened. "It isn't fit to eat! The Jews, you know, never taste it; and such a thing as scrofula is never known among them. With us it is the most common of all diseases; altogether the most common; it is at the root of all our consumptions, cancers, spine complaints, debilities—there is no end to its evils!"

"Whew," said Roosevelt, softly, and with a long breath, "what Crusaders your New Englanders are! But I don't mock it as I used to. I can see myself that there is need enough of them, reason enough for their energy, since there are so many who plant evils, so many others who come with hoe and watering-pot to keep the old evils alive and growing, so many others, who, like myself, are too lymphatic to do much at planting or watering, but still have their feet tangled and their hands scratched continually with evils, and so continually keep their complaints going. So I'm done mocking. Here's your train, Mrs. Hammond," beckoning to my attendant; and in two minutes we were on our way. In two minutes my heart had so sank and sickened that I hardly knew when Mrs. Hammond spoke to me; and she was soon done speaking to me, although she often looked up at me with motherly eyes from the daily paper she was reading.

"There you are, Rose!" called out Mrs. Hammond to some one outside, as we entered the beautiful domain of the Water-Cure. "There you are!"

"And Donna too. See what Donna is doing, Mrs. Hammond!" said a sweet, childish voice; and, looking out, I saw a little girl I would have known to be *hers*, by the deep mourning she wore; or, if this sign had been wanting, I would have known by the large, dark, beautiful eyes. I had never seen such eyes, or, in a child, any half so expressive.

"Her mother has lately died," said Mrs. JAN



Hammond, as, moving slowly up the drive, we lost sight of the child. "Her mother came here from the West Indies. She was in a consumption when she came. She was the most beautiful woman! You can have no idea how beautiful she was. I had the chief care of her; and I have had of Rose, since she died. Here we are. Isn't it beautiful?"

#### *Evening.*

I know not how it was with me when my eyes went over the place on entering, in alighting, and even before entering, when we slowly crossed the bridge, where I first saw the large white building reposing amid graceful trees, shrubs, and verandas, where I saw how lovely the stream was, how lovely the shady bank on which the domain lay; but it was as if a loving spirit came out from all the place, meeting my spirit, my seeking, striving, wearied spirit, and said to it, "Come and rest."

In a less degree, I have felt this in a few other places. In others, as beautiful, I have not felt it, could not, strive with myself as I would. I have been thinking, as I sat here of my oft-felt longing for the old faith of the Greeks and Romans that peopled every nook, every tree, shrub, and flower. Little by little the longing has gone. I see what a poor, inadequate type and foreshadowing it was of what the true, ever-present God reveals Himself to be to all who love Him and understand Him as he is. May my soul bless Him! I cannot look to-night where I do not see Him and feel His spirit coming to meet my spirit. I cannot hear a sound of bird, or river, or the voices of those who still walk in the alleys, or sit in the shrubbery, or in the sheltered court, that I do not seem to hear Him.

### CHAPTER XXIII.

#### *Thursday, the 18th.*

Uros gaining my chamber, the day I came, I immediately looked out to see whether it commanded a view of the grounds in front. It did; and there, in one of the alleys, was the little, southern-looking figure, leading a dog as white as snow, by a cord. Enlivened by her voice, the dog tried to frolic. He sprang one way and another way, but, which way soever he sprang, he was stayed by his cord.

"Your chamber was to be a large, pleasant one; this your friends ordered," Mrs. Hammond was saying. I heard it, heard her say something about a large closet, heard the click of a key turning in its ward, but nothing so plainly as I heard outside the musical voice, saying, "Too bad, Donna! pretty Donna! nice little

Donna! but you ran away; don't you remember? this is why you must be tied with a cord. When you've learned not to run away, then you shan't be tied any more; not any more; not any more, nice little Donna!" She was stooping lovingly over the dog, her face close to his curly, upturned face, to caress him; and what a lithe, graceful form it was; how tiny and supple were the fingers, the whole hand, the wrist, the beautiful arm! how transcendently musical was the voice!

"You're as much taken with her as the rest are, I see, Miss Burnham," said Mrs. Hammond, upon coming to the window, and seeing where my attention was directed. "Her mother's name was Lisle, Mrs. Lisle. Before she died, we didn't know what we would do with Rose, when she did die; for she didn't seem to know that there was anybody else in the world then, but her mother. Donna was lost; had been lost two or three weeks; and it seemed as though her eyes were never off her mamma; except in the night; and then she would wake at almost every bad coughing spell her mamma had, and come out in her night-clothes, trembling, shivering, scared-looking, to cling hold of her, kiss her, and call her such pitying, loving names! It was so the last night. When her mother was gone, when there was no more breath, or life, or motion in her, and we knew there never could be any more, she knew it, I suppose, by our looks. Her eyes—see them now!—you see they are large, bright eyes, any time; but then they were *so* large and scared-looking, as they went flashing from one to another of us! They came to me at last, and settled on me. I have a little girl about Rose's age. I was thinking it might have been she who was left here motherless, and was pitying Rose so when her eyes fell on me! I suppose she felt that I pitied her; for she gave one great cry, enough, it seemed to me, to wake *her*, especially as it was the cry of her child, then came rushing into the arms I opened wide for her; and then—but land! Miss Burnham! I didn't see that you were crying! and standing all this time! and your things not all off yet! I was careless to let you do so; for the doctor told me your friends had written that you are very weak, and have been a long time. I'm afraid I did wrong to say anything about Mrs. Lisle to you."

I gave her assurances to the contrary, thanking her for her attentions.

"Well, that's good! Let me have your gloves—oh! what thin, cold hands you've got! your hands won't be like this, by the time you've been here a month, you'll find. See, here are

shelves in your closet, on this side. I'll lay your things here. There—now I'll tell you; I am to do anything for you that you want done. This is my room," crossing over and laying her hand on a side door—"a little room compared with yours; yours is one of the largest and handsomest in the house. This bell," going farther to lay her hand on a bell-rope, "will bring me in a few minutes, any time, when I am in neither of these two rooms. Rose's chamber is next to mine, and is a room nearly as large as this. I am in her chamber a great deal; I dress her and take all the care of her clothes, and everything. You would be surprised to see the difference between her and my girl, the same age. My girl takes care of herself, dresses herself, and dresses, and nearly takes care of two children besides, one five, the other three. Rose has always lived at the South, you know; this makes all the difference in the world. There, now you look comfortable. Now I shall go and get you something."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*The 19th.*

"If she is much like my mamma, I shan't know how to bear it! I shall feel so bad! and shall be so glad too! Come, Mrs. Hammond; come!" It was the child Rose speaking in this manner. She was on the landing; her voice, eager, musical as a recitative, came along the passage, and in at my partly open door; but Mrs. Hammond was still toiling up the stairs. With panting voice she replied, "I don't know as she exactly looks like her. I don't suppose she does; you mustn't feel disappointed if she don't; I think she some way seems like her; this is all. There, I'm up. You run up more like a kitten than anything else; come."

Mrs. Hammond had been to find Rose to bring her to my room. I thought of Rosenvelt, of the poor mother in her grave, of the spirit gone to God; and all at once love for the child filled and inspired me; and as she approached it was all poured out spontaneously upon her. I had not spoken one word; I had only looked in her face; held out my hand to her and drew her a little toward me, when she threw both arms round me, crying out with a piteous, long-drawn moan, "Oh! mamma! mamma!" She cried a long time; at first with convulsive agitation, then gently; and by-and-by she settled with womanly composure beside me in my big arm-chair, and talked with me hours about her "precious mamma."

"This is what I used to call her—'my pre-

cious mamma,'" she said, trying to control the quivering chin. "She would say I was *her* precious; her precious little girl; then I would say she was *my* precious; my precious mamma."

This was the morning after I came; yesterday morning. She clings very close to me since. With an instinctive delicacy, she fears she will come too often; that "I will think she is a rude girl," to use her own words, "who don't know how to do;" but when I tell her that she can't come too often, that it is the delight of my eyes to see her in my door, her gratefulness knows no bounds. She kisses me, calls me "good," bends down to Donna and asks her if she knows I am good, telling her she ought to; she ought to know it without being told.

"You must know who gave me Donna; I must tell you," she said to me, an hour ago, sitting on a foot-cushion close to me, and busily winding Donna's curls on her fingers. "It was a Mr. Horace, a *good* man; the funniest man ever you saw, that used to come every day, every single day to see mamma, until we went away to Limonar. Then he couldn't come, you see, it was so far, and the water was between. But he used to come"—now she was done curling Donna's hair; her large eyes, changing to sorrow, were raised to mine; "and when he came, mamma would grow so bright! her eyes and her cheeks would grow so bright! and pretty soon she'd laugh so at his fun, and at his dog Leon's sober face that wouldn't change! Then he would go, and mamma's brightness would go; and, all along, for a good while before we went away from New Orleans, she would sink down as soon as he was gone, and I would feel so bad! oh! so bad! But it wasn't like this. Now I know she's gone and can't come again; and it aches so here!" rubbing the slender fingers upon her heart. "I think about it, how, if she was only here now, she'd have you, and perhaps she would live. Oh! I feel so bad that she is dead!" These are her words; but the suffering in the uplifted eyes, in the fingers working upon her aching heart, in the tones exquisitely varied by her rich Southern accent, it is impossible to describe.

*The 20th.*

"There are Mr. and Mrs. Mayfield," said Rose, giving my arm a light, quick touch, this evening, when she and I were sitting together at one of my windows. The evening was perfect, and large numbers were out sitting or sauntering on the grounds, "There they are, there by the larches. They are so pretty! I look at them as long as I can, every time I see them."

It was he. I was sure of it even at the name, at Rose's looks in speaking it. They were out some time, walking this way and that, in the alleys; I had a chance to "make the assurance doubly sure."

## CHAPTER XXV.

*September 23rd.*

A LETTER came from Rosenvelt to-day. He says, "All the house is gone, as I knew it would be when you were gone. We've flesh and blood, and plenty of it left. I contribute my solid one hundred seventy-four pounds to this aggregation; but there used to be a free, strong spirit here I remember, that brightened the place as it is my opinion flesh and blood can no way do alone. They've gained something at Florence. Do they begin, any of them, to find it out? Are there any—is there one man there with such marks of greatness on him, that you know him and he you, for an equal and congenial mate, at a glance? If there is, woe is me that I am not your equal, nor ever can be. If you do see such a one, if such a one sees you, if you come together face to face and talk on, and on, and on, if there is no end to the things you and he have to say to each other, nor ever could be, then, if he offers to take you, wants to take you, let him. Leon and I should miss you; and go from place to place seeking something; (not you, for there would not be a minute in which we would forget that you were lost to us;) but seeking something. We would, both of us, grow gray faster, I haven't the least doubt, than if we had you; nothing that can come to him or to me, can prevent this; yet, if there is a nobler man, and if he wants you, let him have you. Nobody (excepting *him*, of course) could acquiesce more deeply than I. I don't vouch for Leon, here. My heart is sick writing it, I find; but I can bear it, and a great deal more. I have, most of the time, the idea that I am to bear a great deal more; but I shall never say, as some good men have done—David and Isaac Watts, for instance, if I remember right—'Why, oh! Lord?' I shall know why.

"But, let me come out of this! See if this isn't rascally in Somnus and Morpheus, and all the gods that have anything to do with it! Not a drop of their poppy-juice have I tasted at all lately, that some of the water of some of their infernal rivers haven't been mixed with it. So, if I lay my head down, saying, 'Now I will be rid of it,' (by it meaning the wearisome day dream,) 'now I'll sleep,' still more wearisome night dreams, dreams actually horrible, come pouring through my head, until I am actually

driven out of bed; I was last night. Hamlet's mother did as perfidious a thing as these fellows, the gods, do; so did the Scripture woman, Sisera, (if I remember right.)

"To-night I shall start out and shall go tramp, tramp, over the rocky road, up and down the hills, until bodily strength is gone. Then the strain of mind will be gone and I shall sleep. But I wonder how it will be with other nights; with all the rest of the nights of my life. I dread 'em. I can get along with the days, but such nights! Heu!"

*The 25th.*

To-day Alice has written. She says, "Last evening I was desperately sad thinking of dear Robin, and of other things; and I went out to walk down the road. I kept walking and walking; thinking of Robin, thinking of you and of somebody else; I didn't know or think how far I had gone, until I was away down in that lonesome place where the brook is, and the trees come close to the road. Then I began to be timid; it was getting dusky, you see; and I turned to hurry back home, wondering what possessed me to come so far alone. By-and-by, I heard somebody's feet crunching the stones and gravel behind me; and I was frightened almost out of my senses; especially when the steps came nearer and nearer, so that the person, whoever he was, must soon be at my side, passing me. When he was at my side passing me, who do you think I saw that it was? Your Mr. Rosenvelt; and I was never so relieved in my life. I said, before I knew what I was about, 'Oh! I'm glad! I was so afraid!' Then, without knowing it, I began to walk very slow. I was so tired, you see, and so faint on account of having been so frightened! So we kept along very slow. First I told him how frightened I was; and how he laughed hearing me tell it! Then I told him how I miss Robin; and his looks and the few words he said, showed that he pitied me. Oh! how good he is, Anna! I don't think there is another girl in this world who has such reasons to be proud and happy as you have. He came in and rested awhile, for he had had a monstrous long walk. He says it is lonesome and dull over there, since you went; and we all think that it don't seem like the same house. You have no idea how he praises you, or what a serious, sincere face he has when he praises you. But somehow it seems to me that something worries him. I couldn't sleep last night, for thinking about it and for pitying him. Especially, because I remember what Mrs. Eaton said here; you remember I told you—something that she heard your father say to you. And,

day before yesterday, I met Mr. Dobson in the street, and he stopped me to ask if we had heard from you; to ask me, with his keen little black eyes prying into mine, had I heard anything stirring about anybody lately? about you or your 'intended' or anybody? When I said 'No,' looking at him to hear more and know what he meant, he shut up his eyes, nodded a good many times, said, 'Wal, very well,' and went along. What is it, I wonder! Do tell me just so much. Is it anything that he—Mr. Roosevelt, I mean—has reasons to be troubled about? Tell me just this, and I won't ask you to tell me anything more."

"I hope you gain; we all hope so. The neighbors all feel bad about your being so unwell; all the older ones say, 'Her mother was a good woman; she is a good girl; I hope she will get well again.' Write to me, do! Don't forget to tell me what I asked you. Don't forget to get well. Don't forget that I am to be your first bridesmaid, when the time comes. I wonder when it will come! I wonder what you will wear! I dare say it will be white satin, and beautiful, beautiful lace, and orange flowers. Oh! won't you be a splendid creature to see? I wonder what poor little I will wear. I suppose it will be plain muslin; but it shall be of the finest, thinnest, farthest-setting-out! I will be like Phebe, if I can. I'd rather it would be Venus, but I can't come up to Venus. I fancy you'll look like Juno, her very self. You know she was so beautiful that it couldn't be decided which was handsomest, she, Venus, or Minerva. Somehow I always think of Venus as having a little more beauty of face than either of the others; but I suppose Juno was queenly enough, and Minerva wise and learned and sweet enough, to make it about even. Only, you see, Juno was queen. You will be bride. I tell you, Anna, it would near about stop my breath every time I thought of it, if I were in your place."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

*The 29th.*

I do not yet go to the dining-room or to the parlors. I might now, but I do not dare to meet him. I tremble if I think of it. Brave this is, and admirably consistent, in one who longs for one attainment, one only, so to be mistress of circumstances, that they shall one and all uninterruptedly serve her. I go often to ride; but I drop my veil over my face before I go out and before I come in. I go out to walk, and sit on the grounds; but I always go in the morning when they are out riding. They ride between

ten and eleven every fair morning; a carriage is brought to the door for them at ten. It was easy to learn this without inquiring, as it is easy to learn what are all their habits; for they are "the observed," I find, not only of Rose, but "of all observers." My fat neighbor across the landing, Mrs. Blanstone, tells what they do, how they do; calls them "*real aristocratic people*," praising them. When Mrs. Harrington, Mrs. Blanstone, and Mr. Hepburne, who came with Mrs. Blanstone, and sat down with us in the shrubbery this morning, talked about public affairs, Mr. Hepburne said, "It is so and so, or it will be so and so." Mr. Blanstone said, "I used to think thus, and so; but this Mr. Mayfield thinks it's so, and thus, and I'm more than half of the mind that he has the right of it." Then Mrs. Blanstone decisively interposed and said, "Yes, Mr. Blanstone, you *know* he must have been right when he said so and so. You must be sure of that, he has such chances to know!"

Rose is ardent praising him. "He likes Donna, you see," she said, to-day; "he knows her name; he asked me what it was, one day, and ever since he has remembered; and when he speaks to her, when he says, in his way, 'Donna, Donna,' it takes her right off her feet. You never saw how she shakes herself and scrambles. It makes him laugh real hearty. Then he does something else I like. He lays his hand on my head in such a good way, when he calls me a good little girl, his hand feels so good! so cool and good! There he is walking; there's something I want to ask him. I don't know certain whether he knows or not; but I think he does." She bade Donna stay where she was; for she wouldn't know what she, Rose, was talking about, and would play, she said. I knew by this and by the solemn face, the noiseless movement, that she was going to talk about her mother.

"I wanted to ask him," she said, when she came back, "whether he knew that I hadn't got any mother."

"What did he say, dear?" I asked.

"He said, yes, he knew; and took my hand and looked into my face just as you do, and drew me up closer to where he sat. I cried awhile; I feel so bad, Miss Burnham, that she is dead now, when there is so much! He just held my hand until I had done crying, then he said I was a good, faithful little girl to remember my mother. Then he told me just as you have done, darling Miss Burnham, how happy she is now in being so much nearer God than we, any of us, can be when we have the flesh

on. These were his words—"when we have the flesh on." Yes, I told him. I told him I knew that, for Miss Burnham had told me so to make it easier for me to hear, almost the first thing when she came. I asked him if he had happened any time to see a lady with me, that wasn't Mrs. Hammond; that was so sweet and beautiful! so *very* beautiful! He smiled at me a little bit, at first; then he didn't tell me whether he had seen you; but he said he saw that I loved Miss Burnham very much, and you never saw how kind his eyes were, saying it, looking in my face. So I told him that you are the sweetest, blesseddest, and that I love you best, oh! ten thousand times best, of anybody in all the world, and a good deal more."

*The 30th.*

"Do let me see your wrapper, Miss Burnham, dear!" said Mrs. Harrington, that moment, tapping on the door, and opening it to admit herself, at the same instant. "Wrappers are a great bother, any way!—wrappers, and dinner dresses, and evening dresses, and riding dresses, and everything else! What can one do in *this* world, I would just like to know, but *see* to them?" She laughed, but she was withal vexed.

"Yes, your facings are blue," she continued, "so I was thinking blue and drab are beautiful together. I have been talking with Mrs. Blanstone about it. She tells me to get green and crimson like Mrs. Mayfield's. Of course, with Mrs. Blanstone it must be like Mrs. Mayfield's. We were talking about it in the parlor, just now; and the rest of the ladies—there were a dozen there—all like yours the best; the materials and the make. They said you were much the finest figure; Mrs. Blanstone held her hands up stiffly before her, so, and said, 'How *can* you think so? She don't seem to me to be half so—so—I don't know what—aristocratic, like. Mrs. Mayfield is from Philadelphia, you know; Miss Burnham is from New Ham'sher,' as she called it, with her pug nose curled. Now, I want to know, Miss Burnham, if 'tisn't a shame that New Hampshire is sneered at in this way?"

Oh! if one sneered at New Hampshire, or at anything, one wronged oneself, I said, and did something toward making one's pug nose unlovelier than it was before. But for the rest, she remembered how the excellent Prometheus was mocked and sneered at, for his gift of heavenly fire to mortals, until they, his mortals; so rose in ardor and invincible courage and prowess and all the god-like qualities, that the gods saw it; and then they respected the mortals, gave them places beside them, and sneered and mocked their benefactor no more. It needs

a Prometheus, I said, or Christ, or a prophet, or men and women with a Christ-like tenderness, the prophetic instinct in them to honor men for what God intended them to be, for what they will be by-and-by, so we must see the sneers until the manifest occasion for them is past.

"Good! that's well said, Miss Burnham. I wonder I never thought of that myself. I shall open this to Mr. Mayfield. By-the-by you haven't seen him yet?"

"No."

"No, well, this is too bad! Day after day goes, and a day is worth something—don't you know it?—if you can have a chance to talk a little with him somewhere in the course of it. He and you are a great deal alike, think a great deal alike. When will you go down and be introduced to him?"

"I don't know, I'm sure."

"You don't know, you're sure!" laughing. "You don't know, you're sure! as if we were talking of the man in the moon, and of you, the woman in Venus, and so you cannot really know, being no astrologer or seer, when you and he will come together in your orbits. I shall tell him how uncertain you find the subject. But this wrapper! My husband is coming Saturday. He likes to see that I take pains dressing myself; I want a pretty wrapper to please him. You shall see him; you will wonder, as I do sometimes, why he chose me. I suppose, though, that his goodness toward me, my love toward him, made it all natural enough that it should be so; for I do love him devotedly; he is perfection, its very, true self. Tell me, please, how many yards I must get. I'm going to ride over this morning, so as to have it done with."

I told her; and, after a little more examination, a little more complaint of "the business of wrappers, from beginning to end," she said, "Pray for me all the time I'm gone!" and went.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

*October 2nd.*

I was resting, trying to sleep, in my chamber, this P. M. Rose was out in the veranda, near my windows, with Donna, walking. I heard her sweet, musical voice, now and then, talking to Donna, and this lulled me. But pretty soon I heard a voice that did not lull me. It was Mrs. Blanstone's. She was saying—with some hoarseness, some difficulty—"How long do you expect to stay here, little girl?"

"I don't know, ma'am," the childish voice said. "I don't know."

"I suppose you haven't any father? I suppose he is dead?"

"I don't know, ma'am," pronounced the childish voice, still more slowly.

"Oh! I guess you must know, if you think about it. Didn't you ever see a man round your house that you called papa?"

I heard no sound; but when I knew by what Mrs. Blanstone said next, that she had got an answer, I instantly imagined the slow wave of the head, the wonder and questioning coming to overshadow the large eyes.

"Didn't?—oh! well then he died before your remembrance, of course. But didn't you ever hear your mamma say anything about your papa? Didn't? never? Are you sure? That's curious! Did you use to see any man at your house? Did any man use to come every day, or so?"

"Yes, ma'am; Mr. Horace used to; that is all."

"Yes," she said, speaking with briskness, as if now she felt that she had got a clue. "Yes; well, what was the rest of his name? Mr. Horace who? *What* Mr. Horace?"

"I don't know, ma'am," still with the same wonder-struck tones.

"Don't?" I knew the up-and-down inflexion, the expression of sneering. It made my heart ache for Rose. I left my retreat, came forward to the window, and Mrs. Blanstone vanished.

Rose was silent and abstracted after she came in; she looked up in my face several times, as if she would speak, but looked down again on her tassel, without speaking. At length she said,

"Do you think Mrs. Blanstone is a good woman?"

"I hope she is good in many things."

"Do you like her?"

"Not particularly; I don't know much about her; I haven't seen enough of her good things yet to like her very much."

"I want to tell you what she said out there. It sounded bad to me. A good deal that she says any time sounds bad to me; and there don't anything that she says sound very good, I believe," she said, and she gave me her and Mrs. Blanstone's conversation as I have written it. She didn't vary a word; for she is the most truthful, conscientious little body!

"Oh! well," I said, speaking cheerfully, when she was through, "never mind! There are always inquisitive people to ask unnecessary questions. One can just let them all go, as if they had not been asked." And I added, she could run and get her hat. I would put on my

bonnet and shawl, and we would go out and walk. Yes, Donna, did Donna hear what blessed, darling Miss Burnham had said? Did she know what we three were going to do? But my heart ached for her. Seeing how the tender young spirit rose, now that the pressure was lifted, I knew how she had been borne down with it when it was upon her. May God help her! I see one way in which her trial may bless her life, even though it overshadow it; I see how it can give her a meek, chastened, sanctified, and sanctifying soul, such as shall make her life a rich, rare blessing to herself and to others. But only in one path, "the straight and narrow" one of truth, do I find this meek life. In whatever "broad way" I look for it, I see jealousy, passion, hatred of men and women, hatred of the God who made her, stinging, torturing, perhaps maddening her, tender as she is, perhaps wholly destroying her. Seeing one, seeing the other, I know what I shall do. I shall write to-morrow morning to Rosenvelt and lay it all before him; shall show him what must be done—for Rose's sake, if we would not do it for the sake of truth and dignity in our own souls.

*Later.*

Before noon to-morrow, Rosenvelt will know it all. I have said that if we can speak the truth, can own her—with humility before God, with no humility before men, with no defiance toward men, but with love toward them as our fellows, not as our rulers and judges—that if he will consent to this, I can desire no nobler mate; that I will so stand by him, look up to him and honor him, that all others, seeing it, seeing us leading Rose between us, shall honor him too; and love him a thousand times more than they can do with the painful secret shut up in his soul, hindering its serenity and greatness.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

*October 4th.*

JUDGE HAVEN came to-day to tell us that the tablet was set at her grave, and to propose carrying us over to see it. It is in the large, beautiful cemetery over in the town, where the churches, the public buildings, the pleasant streets, the noble dwellings encircled with gardens and embowering limes and elms, are.

Donna watched our preparations, waiting for the word or look that would assure her she was going. When Rose saw it, she stooped to caress the upturned head, and said, "Donna mustn't go. Poor little Donna mustn't go; not there; for she won't know where she is, and will play,

perhaps, there where poor, dear mamma is. Poor, little, blessed Donna! She must stay with Mrs. Hammond." The tablet is strictly according to her directions, Judge Haven told us; is a square column with an Ionic capital, and has this inscription:

CLARA,

Who died at Florence Water-Cure, Northampton,

August 31, 1856,

Aged 28.

*"Made white in the blood of the Lamb."*

Rose wept a great deal, but gently; and, through all her tears, kept her eyes steadily on the grave.

*The 6th.*

"Now, Miss Burnham, here is something I have set my heart on, and don't you shake your head and say no," said Mrs. Harrington, coming into my room yesterday morning. "Mr. Mayfield's going to preach for Mr. Clayton to-day over in that little gray church among the trees—you spoke of it last evening; it is the quietest, most home-like place! Well, he's going to preach there to-day, and you may be sure he will say a good many things that it will be a loss not to hear; a real, irrevocable loss! Mr. Harrington and I want you to go over with us. We shall be so happy having you! you will be so happy riding this beautiful morning! so happy hearing him! You've no idea of it! Every word he says, the very sound of his voice will feed you! You will go, won't you now?"

I trembled, I was weaker than a child; but I said I would go. My heart, when it had recovered its serenity, in a degree, exulted in the thought of hearing him, seeing him, once more. It was the one thing that I desired. This desire once granted, I felt that I could die, or could live; could do or bear whatever came to me to be done or borne, and, in the midst of whatever came, could be satisfied, having once more seen him, and had him before me, speaking.

It was better than I hoped or believed. I am more thankful for that day, yesterday, than for any or all the rest of the days of my life. He looked at me steadily—oh! and with what truthful, heavenly eyes!—a good many times, when he spoke, when he read his hymns. We were not near him in going or coming, or at the church; but he knew me. I felt at the time that he did. And, in the evening, Mrs. Harrington came in to say, "What is it, I would like to know? Do you *know* Mr. Mayfield? Does he know you? Say, now! if there's anything to be got hold of, I want to get hold of it,

and then I shall know my way. Did you ever see him before?"

"Once, at Boscawen. He preached there for my uncle one time a year ago this last summer, when he was on his way to the lake and mountains, when he and uncle had just met at an association, and uncle sent him, while he went another way. I heard him preach that day, and saw him a little while the next evening. That is all."

"Yes?" giving the little word an incredulous up-and-down inflexion. "It appears to me it isn't all. All along, I've talked to him about you, have said a thousand times more than I should think of saying to anybody else about a stranger, and I see now that he drew it out of me with his attentive eyes and ears. I can see how he has looked all along; and I suppose the reason he didn't tell me he had met you, was my saying to him—as I remember I did the very first time I spoke of you to him—that there was one lady I wanted him to see, but that I couldn't get her started. She was as cool, I said, or, at any rate, as immovable as Mohammed's mountain. I remember now how he looked when I said it. He looked as though he thought he wasn't used well, and he wasn't! If you had met him and known him at Boscawen, you should have given him a chance to meet you here. He deserved this of you, good as he is! When will you come down into the parlors, or out into the shrubbery, or out of your room somewhere where we can meet him?"

*Evening.*

I felt myself weak, cowardly, and little, felt that he was calm and great. I felt what I said when I answered, "I don't know a single reason, Mrs. Harrington, why I should take one step to put myself in his way. He has enough. If he hasn't, I am less than nothing to one like him."

"Oh!" said she, laughing, "if this isn't curious! You don't know anything about yourself, if you think so! There isn't another woman in this house who begins to be your equal! A fact, Miss Burnham! I am saying precisely what I think, what anybody else must think, that knows. And I'm sure he wants to see you. I'm *sure* of it! He said as much as to say this to me, this evening; after dinner we met in the veranda. I asked him if he noticed you to-day; he said, 'Yes, he did;' worked his tooth-pick a little, and turned a little away. But he turned back again in a moment, when I told him how good you found the sermon, the prayers, the hymns, and all the place—the simple, quiet, little church where we were, and all. His looks,

when I told him this, showed that he estimates you somewhat differently from what you estimate yourself. How do you like my husband?"

"He looks good!" I answered, heartily.

"Don't he? He is good!—so kind always, and so full of courage! He's been courage and strength and all, to me, for more than a year. Now I hope he is going to have his reward. I suppose I am really getting well. The doctor says I am; and I know myself that I don't feel like the same person that I did when I came here six weeks ago. Haven't I reason to be thankful? Yes, indeed! but I must go now. I told my husband I wouldn't be gone long."

She gave me a kiss that did me good; said, "Good-by, dear," and went, leaving a bright look behind.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### *The 7th—Morning.*

WHEN Mr. and Mrs. Harrington, Rose, Donna, and I came in, this morning, from a pleasant walk, Mr. Hepburn, who is Mrs. Harrington's uncle, was sitting in the shrubbery, and we went to join him. He was reading, and when we came, he drew off his glasses, and began to tell us what he had just read. Mrs. Stone, sitting some way off, muffled in her big shawl, came with her book in her hand, to sit nearer, to tell us what she had been reading in "*Aurora Leigh*;" to say that Lady Waldemar was "a wretch, if there was one on God's earth!" to say that the world was full of just such hypocrites; or of hypocrites in some shape. It made her sick! If there was an unpardonable sin in these days, she believed it was this hypocrisy, this phariseism—for they were both one now, as they were in Christ's day; or, if they weren't one, they went together. She had no patience with them!

The gentlemen laughed; Mr. Hepburn a little, Mr. Harrington heartily. "See my husband!" said Mrs. Harrington. "That's the way he always does when I scold. He always laughs just like that."

"There isn't one redeeming thing about a Pharisee!" went on Mrs. Stone, after shutting off her smile, after thinking a moment. "A publican is a sinner; but he knows he is a sinner; he feels it and prays standing a great way off. A Magdalen, poor thing! comes crouching into the dirt, where she thinks she belongs, she has been such a sinner, she is so sensible of her sins, poor, poor thing! but the Pharisee!—We have got one of these here. When I read or think of Lady Waldemar, she's Mrs.—you all know who," (and we all did; we all knew it was

Mrs. Blanstone.) "There she comes now! mark her approach."

"When she comes," said Mrs. Harrington, speaking low and quickly to us all, "I'm going to ask her if she ever feels herself a sinner."

Then she said, raising her voice, "Good morning, Mrs. Blanstone; come in and sit with us."

Mrs. Blanstone, loftily putting her long ribbons back, said, "No, excuse me, I will stand here." She was standing at the back of the circular row of seats, close to Mrs. Harrington and me.

"Mrs. Blanstone!" said Mrs. Harrington, wheeling round and looking up brightly into Mrs. Blanstone's imperturbable face, "do you ever feel that you are a sinner?"

Mrs. Blanstone smiled—we all did—at the open, curious question.

"Do you? I want to know. We've been talking about sinners, about feeling our sins; I want to know what you will say to this."

"Why, yes, of course I know I'm a sinner sometimes. Of course everybody is sometimes."

"Yes; but, if you please, we will let 'everybody' go now, and find out how it is with you. How do you sin oftenest?"

"Why, in getting out of patience with Mr. Blanstone and with Bridget"—this was her maid—"and with the victuals on the table when they don't suit me, I suppose."

"And let me ask, don't you think you are a very proud woman? a much prouder woman than you have any reason to be? than it is strictly religious to be?"

"Yes, I suppose I am. I think so very often and try to get over it; but I can't; I was brought up so. I suppose my mother was the proudest woman in Lowell. My father was a factory agent; and the factory agents—if you know anything about them—are wealthy; and, having so many under them, they get some high notions into their heads, some of them. And so do their wives, some of them."

"And their daughters, some of them," subjoined Mrs. Harrington, with the same bright look upturned.

"Yes, I'm afraid so."

"Well, this isn't so bad, is it, Miss Burnham, is it, Mrs. Stone, if they know they are proud, and know their pride is a sin; and lament it, and work against it?"

Mrs. Stone said, "No; not if they really and humbly felt it to be a sin and hated it, as all sin should be hated, and worked hard to be rid of it."

"No," Mrs. Harrington said, "not if a little



sin *did* cling then," (because it was born in one, or brought up in one,) "we mustn't, any of us, be too hard upon it. Don't you say so, Miss Burnham?"

"Yes," I replied; "for, if we are too hard upon it, it proves that we have, at least, the sin of hardness."

"Good! yes!" Mrs. Harrington said.

Mrs. Blanstone, musing and putting back her ribbons, said that there was one sin she set her face against, years ago, and that was—bad conduct in women, that kind of conduct that ruins them.

"Oh! as to that," Mrs. Stone said, "we all agree, of course. But I imagine there are many other kinds of conduct that ruin women in God's sight. I have seen many a woman ruined in His sight, whose conduct, in the opinion of the world, was irreproachable. Many a pharisaic woman, whom Jesus would condemn as he did the Pharisees of old, led a *strict* life of outward morality; but was, as Jesus said, fair without, within full of corruption."

"Still, of course, Mrs. Stone, you think a great deal of a good moral life?" Mrs. Harrington said.

"Yes, indeed! it takes it all to be a Christian; grace in the heart, morality in the action; and I say grace first, because it is first; grace is the fountain, morality the stream. Our first concern is the fountain; for if this isn't clear and what it ought to be, neither is the stream if its border is ever so fair. What we need to make us Christians, is Paul's faith, his grace in the soul; James' works, John's love, Peter's zeal. Christ had them all; we must have them all, in our human degree, or we fall short. I am sure of this! I have thought enough about it to know! Besides, it is the fundamental doctrine of all my minister says. So I say to the mere moralist, (and I'm afraid there are more moralists than Christians at this day, in all of the churches, and out of them,) out with your good works, if you have pride in them, if you expect them to recommend you to God, or anybody! out with your stream that depends solely upon the summer rains and the melting of winter snows!"

"I am glad to hear you say that, Mrs. Stone," said I, retrieving the breath I had been holding, by a long-drawn sigh of satisfaction. "I like to hear you say that."

"So do I," said Mrs. Harrington. "Let me tell you what I've been thinking; I've been thinking that we all, perhaps, have at least one sin to which we are comparatively blind and tolerant; and all, perhaps, look out one sin held

elsewhere, on which we pile our reproaches and scorn. What I hate most is scandal! this scandal that picks people to pieces, tears them, and tramples them bleeding under one's feet. Oh! how I hate this!"

Her eye flashed as it always does in mentioning the subject. "And it isn't because I have suffered by it, myself, either; for people have let me alone as few are let alone. But it is because it is abominable! As true as I live, I would hold this right hand of mine in the fire, and burn it to the stump before I would bruise, and mar, and trample on one man or woman on this earth—where we'll all be likely to suffer enough by the time we are in our coffins and our hands folded, our lips stilled forever, if ill-will does not make it harder for us; if love instead of ill-will surrounds us. As it is—you just think of it a minute, what things go on here on this earth on which the blessed sun shines by day and the blessed stars by night, on which the flowers bloom day and night! think how neighbors back-bite! how Christians—so-called, and this is what many of them are, in the main—eye each other jealously! how politicians, who have the care of our country, wrangle, hate, misrepresent each other, shoot each other down, hunt each other's reputations, more like beasts of prey than like men who are showing the other nations what a republic can be and do! Oh! I'm ashamed! I'm angry!"

"But scandal will cease some time," said I. "All we can do is to keep our charity and patience here, as we keep them elsewhere. God knows what He does, and He lets it go on awhile, cuts it off little by little, as He does all other evils. Evil is never eternal. This I have seen clearly in my sickness, that has shown me so much that I never saw before. The time is sure to come when 'the lion shall lie down with the lamb and a little child shall lead them'—a little child shall lead them, Mrs. Harrington."

"Yes, that is true; that is the mine of comfort," said a voice close behind me, at my left shoulder; a voice that sometimes would have startled me, that now was but the most musical of ripples upon the summer stream.

"Oh! but if this never comes to our land, in our day!" sighed Mrs. Harrington.

"If not to our land, then to another; and all lands are God's," said I, "if not in our day, then in another; and all days are God's; this day and that day and all days. We can wait His time."

"But not without doing something, I hope!" plead she.

"No indeed! not without working, striving,

praying! not without feeling how wicked evil is; but with patience toward those who do not feel as we do, or who are hindered with the real difficulties in the way; with patience to wait God's time."

"Oh! well, I can stand that! If you'll see what an evil it is, I can stand your patience; can even admire it; I do, every day of my life, although I have little of it myself, as you have all just seen. Mr. Mayfield, this is Miss Burnham; Miss Burnham, here is Mr. Mayfield. I am glad to introduce you to each other; for it is my opinion, that if we don't live to see the time when all the lions shall lie down by the side of the lambs, when this is the universal order of things, on the hill-sides and in the pastures, we, or somebody, will see here and there a lion so lying down, here and there a lion so led by you, Mr. Mayfield, by you, dear," speaking to me.

Mr. Mayfield came in and sat down; we had a good time; but he was reserved toward me, although very gentle. I was reserved toward him; but I thought, with my heart aching a little with all its joy, that there was no other such voice, no other such face and bearing, no other such man, in this whole world. Mrs. Mayfield, on whose account he is here, (for he is well,) is gaining, he answered, in reply to Mrs. Harrington's inquiries. They had been here only a day or two, when I came, I find. They came over from Hadley. It is Mr. Mayfield's native place. His parents are gone, but his brother still lives at the old homestead, which Mrs. Harrington and he spoke of as being very green and beautiful. He often rides over to it, of an afternoon, while Mrs. Mayfield is resting. She does not yet ride so far; but soon will, they say. He will soon go to Philadelphia; one more week will end his term of absence; but he thinks he may overrun it two weeks or so, perhaps; although he does not know.

*Wednesday, the 8th.*

Mr. Harrington has gone. Mrs. Harrington and I were sitting, after dinner, to-day, in the veranda. Rose was in the garden below, where she could see us, braiding flowering grasses into a garland for Donna's neck and head, when Mr. Mayfield came out; came respectfully begging our pardon for the intrusion, pleading with a sincere, delicate gallantry, that he could not very well help coming. Mrs. Harrington left us, after awhile, to go and help Rose about making Donna's crown stay on. It troubled Rose. Then, turning to me, he inquired about uncle Julius; spoke of the change in my father's family, meaning my father's marriage.

"Then you have heard from Boscawen Plain since you were there last season?" I asked.

He replied that he had had a letter from my uncle. I was silent, waiting for more, wondering why uncle Julius did not tell me he had written.

"It was in July, before I left Philadelphia. I wrote to him, for I thought of going to Boscawen Plain in my vacation. I altered my plans after hearing from him."

I suppose his voice did in reality sound as it always does; I suppose he looked and carried himself as he always does; but it somehow seemed otherwise to me. It seems to me now that his voice changed, that some thought of pain bore him down a little, so that his head was a little bowed. But Mrs. Harrington and Rose came, and Donna with her fantastic crown of grasses, her fantastic behavior, and then we were obliged to laugh. Rose's laugh rang all about.

One thing I perceive, I am happier this evening than I know how to bear. But there is no reason for it; this I know. On the contrary, there is a great deal in my affairs to fill me with anxiety and sadness. I say this to myself, repeat it to myself again and again, that the joy which is without reason, may go, that the serenity which is never without reason, may come.

*Saturday, the 11th.*

Letters came to-day from Alice and Rosenvelt.

"There is something going on, as Mrs. Eaton says," wrote Alice. "I know there is, you see by the looks all round. But I can't get hold of one thing. I'm angry! Mrs. Eaton knows what it is; or she owns there is something, owns that she can guess what it is nigh enough! This is all I can get out of her. She sits with her lips pinched up, and looks like Mrs. Pipchin in 'Dombey and Son.' I told her so, and showed her the picture. I told her to-day she is a real mummy, and she is! I'm angry with you too; for what is the reason. I wonder that I can't be told one word of what *you* can know all about! When I begged so, too, to be told just one thing—whether it is anything against Mr. Rosenvelt; anything that worries him. I begged hard; but no! I wasn't fit to be told. I was quite too unimportant, I suppose; for not one word was there, any more than if I hadn't begged at all! when my head was so full of it! 'Now,' thought I, when your letter came, 'here it is; now I've got hold of it!' I tore the envelope all to pieces, to get at it. And then it wasn't there! Everything else was there, it was a beautiful letter; this I have found out

since. Then, it seemed to me that nothing was there; that it was the most provoking letter ever written; that nobody could write a more provoking letter if they tried their hardest, used their best skill. Pardon me, Nan. I hope I shall never be so eager, so unjust again. But perhaps I shall; there is no knowing; for I am somehow all up in arms. I feel—I don't know how, but, in a way, hot-headed and in confusion as to affairs. Alas! that I do. I've always been a wild one, as you know; but I never before felt so much as if life was all jumbled up. Alas, for Robin! dead! lying there still in his grave, when I need him here so much! He used to still and quiet me almost any time, by showing me his own deep quiet. The darling! the blessed darling! Alas for you! gone! so far off that I can't see you, can't lay my hand on your arm, walking or sitting with you, and feel it do me good. Alas! alas for me! wave-tossed, without oar or rudder—or even a boat, for that matter.

"Ma is well—or, I suppose, she is. I suppose everybody is well. I am so selfish, within a few days, I don't really know how it is with ma, or anybody. If any—there is Mr. Roosevelt passing, riding his magnificent horse, Pedro. He looked this way, (he didn't yesterday, or day before,) saw me through the snow-ball, and bowed to me, pleasantly. Yesterday and day before, he rode by like some mysterious baron just out of his castle for an airing; as gloomy and as unapproachable. I couldn't understand how it was possible that he was the one I had laughed and had such merry times with. I feel better now, for seeing him look like the real Mr. Roosevelt, once more. The sky looks different, somehow, and the green of the yard.

"Good-by. Write to me and tell me how to be *always* good-natured and happy. I wish I knew. I can't bear to go up and down with everything. I do now. When I began this letter, I was down where the sun never shines. Now, with no reason, or, without any reasonable reason, I am up on the top of the mountains. But, no use in complaining. I am what I am. At any rate."

## CHAPTER XXX.

ROSENVELT's letter is a long one. It repeats the others. He can see, he says, that truth is best. Sometimes, when he reads what I say, or thinks of it, he feels strong for a moment; for a moment he thinks he is going to do all I ask; and, the instant that he feels this, it is as if some mummy-like wrappings opened and let

him out all at once into *life*. He is free; he knows then, for a minute or two, what it is to be really free; understands as he never began to understand before, what hidden meaning this has—"and the truth shall make you free."

Alack, but it goes! Some gossiping women with their heads close together, show themselves to his imagination; he sees how horror-struck they are; he can see tongues thrust out as if the gossips were half woman, half serpent, can hear them hissing—hu! In the night this is, that they turn to half serpent; but he is full of the horror and feverishness of it, in the morning; and all the next day, if he don't shake it off violently. So, it must be the old story—he can't stand it. Is there no compromise, he asks, for us to make? If he will consent to let the child come, as—but! this would never do! Don't I see as he does that if the child came simply as my *protegee*, which is what he was going to propose, don't I see? The child would recognize him. Mrs. Eaton would ply her with questions; would put this, and that, and that, and that together, and there it would be, the whole affair! Others—the women he sees with their heads together and their tongues darting—would get near Mrs. Eaton, would ply her with questions, would get all she knew, out of her, would read all she guessed in her expressive pantomime; nay, perhaps she would, after awhile, open and spread her patch-work before them, to let them see if she wasn't a shrewd one! if it wasn't ingeniously put together, since she got it out of so little! had so little to do it with! Didn't I see? He did; and it was more than *he* could stand! But was there no other compromise? If he, if I, could speak and live the truth in all else, (and he would religiously,) might not this pass? Was there nothing else that could be done with the child?—the poor thing! the witness on earth, and innocent avenger of his wrong? He did not know, but he felt as though there was no more solid, sure comfort for him anywhere. If he parted me from the child, if he saw me beside him and the child was far off mourning for me, exposed to all manner of gross inquiry and speculation, as he foresaw that she would mourn, would be exposed, he could have no peace. He would know that he had no right to the cup of happiness, and that he ought to put it aside, as often as my dear, dear hand offered it to his lips. If I remained with the child—only! did I not see? I could not remain with the child. I could not, of course, give up my home and all my friends. And, if I came and brought her there, there was my mother. He could take himself out of sight,

but the child would, likely as not, recognize my mother. Then there was my father, to be offended, perhaps; there was Mrs. Eaton, to be set to work, surely; and there were the women with the tongues! So, so, what was there to do but to curse all the past? and—and what, he was sure he did not know or see. He must leave all to me. I had a simpler, clearer wisdom than he knew anything about; he had known that a long time; he knew it better and better. He would leave it all with me. This relieved him; why had he not seen before that this could be done? he supposed because his mind must first wade through all manner of morass and bog before it could get to its knoll, where the dry land was and the berries were growing. He had always noticed it, at any rate, that there must always be a time of pro-

digious turmoil and conflict with him, before relief came. Would I be glad, with him, that it had come to him, in a degree, writing that page? Would I settle things exactly as I saw fit? He was at my bidding; he saw clearly that he would find comfort in doing as I bade; only, there was one thing I must not require; that he was sure of never being ready to do. Would I forgive him? would I bless him a little, and let my blessing lie on him through all the rest of his and my life? however life went with us beyond this blessing, by me kept constantly on his unworthy head—his not utterly unworthy head, for, there upon it, would lie my blessing. I would, he knew, I was such a patient, blessed girl!

So, adieu, and God bless me.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## REDMAN'S RUN.

BY FRANK LEE BENEDICT.

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1860, by Frank Lee Benedict, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 48.

## CHAPTER IV.

Two weeks passed, and our visitors still lingered. I heard my uncle tell Prudence that he thought they would remain a month. I do not think that either Alice or her mother desired to prolong their stay; but Mr. Morgan did not choose to go, and his wishes were evidently paramount. Indeed, I think so many years had elapsed since his wife had exercised her own will, that she had nearly forgotten that she ever possessed one.

I saw that Alice did not stand in such dread of her father. She loved him, that was a child's duty, but his weaknesses pained her, and she would have resisted his tyranny, where her mother was concerned, only every attempt made the poor woman's life more miserable.

So the days went on, pleasantly enough, I suppose, although I was kept as much aloof as possible from the visitors. My uncle found an immense deal of copying for me to do, old papers that I am certain were of no earthly use, but which, at all events, detained me in a little room back of the library, that he occupied for his study.

There were drives and rides in which I seldom had a share; Maurice was always the companion of Alice, and apparently regarded her as belonging wholly to himself. Mr. Morgan evidently looked upon me in no favorable light—I knew I had my cousin to thank for that, but I disliked the pompous man so thoroughly that I cared little about it.

Still, with Alice and her mother I became well acquainted; how we managed I can hardly tell, for every quiet effort was employed to keep us apart. But often, when the rest had gone out, Mrs. Morgan would steal down into the library, and we passed hours in long, pleasant conversations, in which she unconsciously talked a great deal about her daughter, and I was an eager listener.

I found that she was a woman of much more mind than I had supposed, intelligent, and well informed; but she was so timid, and ill-health had so shattered her nerves, that one did not

discover her superior qualities, except by familiar intercourse.

She spoke but seldom of Maurice, and when she did, it was in a hesitating way, which showed how much she dreaded the proposed marriage, although there was no direct reference made to it.

There must have been many painful scenes concerning that affair, for often I heard Mr. Morgan's voice in his wife's room, loud and angry; and once, when the door opened suddenly as I passed, I caught sight of Mrs. Morgan weeping convulsively, and Alice standing beside her, pale as a ghost, but with a stubborn resolution in her face, which it would not have been easy to combat.

There were many quarrels, too, between my uncle and Maurice; those I frequently heard, and I pitied my uncle. Affection for that unprincipled young man was the only holy sentiment in his nature, and it must have cut him to the heart to find it met with insult and ingratitude.

So altogether, though there were many pleasure excursions, frequent parties, and the house nearly all the time overflowing with guests and excitement, I doubt if any of the persons I have mentioned enjoyed much peace.

One day, I heard an angry discussion between my uncle and Maurice. Not that I desired to play the listener, but I could not move without being discovered, and received by both with a storm of passion and invective, so I quietly kept my seat in the window recess.

"I tell you," Maurice said, "that I must marry the girl soon—I am so cramped with debts that I do not know which way to turn."

"You are so reckless and extravagant," returned my uncle; "during the past year you have wasted a small fortune."

"I don't think you are just the one to lecture me," sneered my cousin; "so let us hear no more of that."

My uncle walked hurriedly up and down the room, evidently deeply wounded by the unfeeling remark.

"You shall marry Alice," he said, after a moment's silence; "I have sworn it, and I will not be balked. Her father dare not refuse—he has promised, and I have a hold over him which will keep him in order."

"The old lady evidently does not appreciate me much," Maurice said.

"A perfect nonentity! Take care of the young lady, it is all you have to do."

"I cannot understand that girl! There was one time I really thought she liked me; but, since we came here, her manner has completely changed. She fights off so admirably, that I have had no opportunity to offer myself again."

"She is shy——"

"Not a bit! I believe that young scapegrace is at the bottom of it all."

"Who?"

"Why Paul—young imp! I shall strangle that boy yet, I know I shall."

"Let him alone, Maurice, I will not permit you to annoy him, remember that! Your supposition is a ridiculous one—why he is a mere boy."

"He is nineteen, older than she by some months! I half think his pale, sentimental face has made an impression upon her. When he comes into the room she grows silent—when he talks she listens with eyes and ears. If I believed it, I would blow his brains out to-morrow."

"Folly, madness! The idea that she could fancy him after having known you. I will go and talk with Morgan; he's so occupied frightening his poor wife to death with his spiritualism that he thinks of nothing else. He has consented to your marrying his daughter; you asked the girl three months ago, and she did not say no——"

"She begged for time."

"She has had it, more than enough. Where is Morgan?"

"In his wife's room."

My uncle went out, and in a moment my cousin followed.

I did not stir from my seat. There was a whirl in my brain, a delicious tumult in my heart, which deprived me of all strength. Could Maurice's sneering words be true? Did Alice care for me? Before that no gleam of hope had brightened my heart, and in the darkness I had been cowardly, but his words had given me courage.

I knew then that I loved Alice Morgan; not with youthful passion, but with a power and energy which took me out of my boyhood forever. After the first dizzy excitement was over,

I paced up and down the room, laying a thousand plans for the future, and resolving with the strength of a newly awakened will that Alice should be freed from the wiles of my cousin.

An hour might have elapsed, when I was disturbed by the entrance of Mrs. Morgan, weeping so bitterly that she did not perceive my presence.

I hurried toward her as she sank into a chair and called her name, really alarmed by her hysterical distress

"Oh! Paul," she said, trying to compose herself, "I did not see you—pray excuse me."

"Something very painful has happened," I replied; "tell me what it is?"

She shook her head, struggled against her tears, but they would burst forth in spite of all her efforts.

"Yes, I will tell you," she said, "my heart is fairly breaking, and I have no one to whom I can go for comfort."

"If I can do anything," I replied, "you know you may trust me."

"I do—you are kind and good; but nobody can help us now, nobody."

She wept again, but quietly. I soothed her as well as I was able, and after a few moments she spoke more calmly.

"I do not feel as if you were a stranger, I knew your mother so well, and loved her so dearly. You have been very kind to me, and I have been for years of so little consequence, that it is pleasant to find some one who treats me with affection and respect."

"You have your daughter—she loves you!"

"Oh! Paul, Paul, her very affection is only made an added torment! But no matter for myself, I shall only have to suffer a few years more; but she is so young, so innocent, it breaks my heart to see her happiness so recklessly flung away."

"Are you speaking of her marriage with my cousin?"

"You know I am! I can talk freely to you, for I believe you know him thoroughly. Oh! Paul, he is a bad, wicked man, under that pleasant seeming—I shall die if they force my Alice into his power."

"But she does not love him?"

"Indeed she does not! She was very young when they first met, she could not but be pleased with his winning manners, but she had no thought of love. Now her father insists upon this marriage, tells her that she has gone so far she cannot draw back—threatens her, not for herself, but me, if she does not obey;

and, to save me a pang, Alice would give her life."

"But why do you not resist?"

"Stop, Paul; the word sounds like a mockery! You are young and strong, you do not know what it is to be crushed down by years of illness and suffering beyond belief. Even Alice does not dream the truth, it was useless to pain her, and I am such a coward—you cannot think!"

She broke off, trembling in every limb. She had spoken truly, she was physically and mentally a coward; and, in the agony of her face, I could read the horrible ordeal through which she had passed.

"Has Alice promised to marry him?" I asked.

"She did not do that; they have so confused my mind by their sophistries that I hardly know what was said. On the passage home, Maurice asked her to be his wife; she was so young, so ignorant! She told him that she had never thought of love—she was pleased with his manners—she had liked him as a friend. Her father joined with him—told her that was quite enough, she cared for no one else. But Alice was firm, she would not allow herself to be drawn into an engagement, and so the matter rested. But her father never ceased to urge it, ordered me to do so, tormented me so much that Alice was ready to consent for my sake."

"And now, now?"

"The longer she knew Maurice the less she liked him; such terrible reports have reached me that I dread him as I would a fiend. He was constantly with us in town—Mr. Morgan insisted upon our accepting this invitation. They have given every one to understand that Alice and your cousin are engaged. They will force her to it, I know they will; she is firm, courageous in her own right; but now her father has found a plea that he knows will be all powerful."

"And that?"

"He has just hinted to her that if she would not expose him to some great danger, she must marry Maurice. Before that, only yesterday, she positively refused, and all her father's threats were useless. But he has taken strong ground now in appealing to her love for him."

"But do you believe this story?"

"I cannot tell. Oh! Paul, there are such dreadful mysteries in this world! He insinuated that your uncle had some hold of him, and that he could do us all much injury if Alice did not consent. But he likes Maurice, and he is rich; Mr. Morgan has so much respect for wealth! I am sure he has always loved Alice

better because of that hundred thousand dollars her aunt left her!"

"Yet that very fortune is doubtless the source of half her suffering."

"Don't you believe that Maurice loves her?"

"Yes, I believe he does; but I tell you, Mrs. Morgan, his love is a disgrace—it will be fatal to any woman who places herself in his power."

"Don't tell me, don't, it only frightens me more! I know you will despise me—I loathe myself! But I am so crushed, so broken down, only fit to creep into my grave and lie there. Yet I ought to live, ought to protect my daughter, but I cannot! I lean on her; I am so despicable and mean, that sometimes I wish she would marry Maurice that I might have a little rest and peace."

"If she thought that, she would sacrifice herself at once."

"I know it—she does not dream I am so vile! And I am not, it is only when I get completely worn out—when there seems nothing left but to fall down and die, that I allow myself to indulge in such thoughts."

"Does she talk much to you of this affair?"

"Oh! that is the most terrible thing in the whole misery! I am so weak that she cannot depend on my counsel—the least thing throws me into such a nervous state, that she does not let me see how she suffers. I am a wicked woman, Paul, wicked! I have had no peace here, and now I shall see my daughter's happiness ruined, and suffer through all eternity because I did not save her."

"But you have no power," I said, trying to soothe her, for she was wringing her hands and sobbing more bitterly than before. "Alice must act for herself, must be true to her own heart."

"You are so brave, and she is too! I will not let her see how wretched I am—I have hidden a great deal from her; I am not quite a monster, Paul, indeed I am not! I love my child, she is all I have on earth, I would endure blows, torture, anything for her."

"Where is she now?"

"Your cousin has asked her to ride out, she will have to go. I don't know what was decided upon between her and her father. When he told her that vague, terrible story, I could endure no more, and ran away. I must go to my room; if Mr. Morgan thought I had been telling you anything, he would be dreadfully angry."

She hurried away abruptly; and in a moment I heard Alice speaking to Prudence in the hall.

"Do you know where Mr. Redman is?"

"Here, at your service, fair lady," I heard

my cousin say. "But how is this? You are dressed for a drive, I thought we were going to have a ride?"

"I prefer going out in the carriage," she replied, quietly; "my mother has one of her dreadful nervous headaches, and needs the air." "My uncle will be most happy to drive her out."

"Please let me have my own way, Mr. Redman; you have no idea how poor mamma suffers."

"You are very cruel to me," he returned; "very, Alice."

"Run away and do as I wish, or I shall be more so," I heard her say, with an attempt at playfulness, through which her distress was very apparent.

"I must, of course; but are you always going to avoid me so?"

"Please leave me to myself to-day," she said, tremblingly; "I entreat you to do so."

I heard Maurice go out on the veranda and call to a servant,

"Put up the horses, Waters. Tell them to get out the open carriage."

Then Alice came forward and entered the breakfast-room where I was standing. When she saw me, she started back as though her first impulse was to run away.

"Did I frighten you?" I asked.

"I did not know there was any one here," she said, moving toward the window. "Mamma told me that she had been having a long conversation with you, Mr. Paul; what made her cry so bitterly?"

"She was very nervous and low; you know the least thing agitates her."

"Poor mamma!" she murmured to herself, leaning wearily against the window-sill.

Her eyes looked out upon the pleasant lawn with a dreary gaze that made my heart ache. How I longed to utter the thoughts which rushed to my lips, but that was neither the time nor the place, and I resolutely crushed back the tide of passionate sympathy which struggled for utterance.

She was very lovely as she stood thus, but there was a weary, hopeless expression in her face and attitude extremely painful to see in one so young.

"You look pale," I said, feeling the need of making some common-place remark to restrain my own feelings. "Are you unwell?"

"No; that is, I think not."

I saw Maurice passing the house; some bitter feeling made me long to torture myself and her.

"And I am soon to greet you as my cousin," I said, suddenly.

She turned her eyes upon me with a sad reproach, that made me long to throw myself at her feet and beg forgiveness.

"You are cruel," she said, forcing her pale lips into a smile; "I did not think you would try to pain me, Mr. Chenery."

I did not make any answer. Her suffering roused such a tempest of passion in my soul, such mad love, such implacable resentment toward those who were so ruthlessly plotting her unhappiness, that I grew dizzy and sick, clinging blindly to the window-sill for support.

Alice did not observe my agitation. She had seated herself upon a low couch near, her hands were folded idly in her lap; her head drooped forward with an intense mental weariness; and her eyes glanced restless around as if searching for some means of escape, some haven of refuge from the dangers that beset her.

"Miss Morgan—Alice!" I exclaimed.

My voice must have betrayed the agony I was enduring, for she started and looked wildly around.

"I cannot bear this," I said; "it is too much—too much."

"And it will never end," she muttered, pursuing the train of her own thoughts, "never!"

I made a step forward—another instant and I should have poured out the current of passion which seethed through my veins, but Maurice's voice in the hall stung me like a blow.

"Now, Miss Alice," he said, "the carriage is ready."

The girl rose, drew her shawl about her and turned to go.

"Good-by," she said; "you are very kind to my poor mother—I thank you for it."

So she moved slowly away and left me to my solitude. I stood by the window; saw Maurice assist her and Mrs. Morgan into the carriage, and then they drove swiftly off, disappearing down the avenue as rapidly as my quick growing hopes had taken flight.

I must have been very pale, for when Prudence entered, a little while after, she exclaimed loudly at my appearance.

"You look like a ghost," she said; "what on earth's the matter with you, Paul?"

But I broke away from her as quickly as possible and went up to my own room, leaving her quite vexed with me because I would not acknowledge that I was ill.

That evening, as we were sitting together in the parlor, I saw the door open, and Prudence looking in, with a scared face.



"Paul! Mr. Redman!" she cried.

I extricated myself from the confusion, and ran after my uncle into the hall where Prudence stood, so much excited that she scarcely noticed the fracas she had caused.

"The crazy woman!" she whispered. "I saw her again!"

"Impossible!" said my uncle.

"I did! I was in the dining-room—she looked in at the window—oh! dear, oh! dear!"

Fortunately, I had closed the parlor door behind me, so she was not heard.

"I saw her," repeated Prudence. "Oh! that face, that face!"

"Hush!" said my uncle, sternly. "Paul, come with me."

We sought everywhere about the house, but found no trace of the mad woman. I ran down the avenue—hunted the flower garden, the green-houses, but all in vain.

"You were mistaken, Prudence," said my uncle.

She made no reply, and he went in again to his guests, and left Prudence and me standing on the verandah.

"Are you sure you saw her?" I asked.

"Could I forget that face?" she exclaimed, with a shudder.

"Who is she? Who can she be?"

"Don't worry me with silly questions—as if I knew! But she'll frighten me to death yet!"

She went away trembling and sorely troubled; while I wandered off into the grounds, down by the run, and puzzled myself with all sorts of wild fancies concerning the lunatic, until the recollection of Alice Morgan came back and soothed my unrest like a pleasant dream.

## CHAPTER V.

THE next morning, I encountered Maurice on the verandah. For some time past we had mutually avoided one another; but just then he was so much irritated by his ill-success in regard to Alice, that his long nursed hatred toward me burst out more freely than usual.

"Idling about after your old fashion," he said, with a sneer. "Any other fellow of your age would be ashamed to be such a baby!"

"You had nothing of the sort with which to reproach yourself," I replied; "for at sixteen you were more thoroughly depraved than most men of forty."

"How long do you mean to live here on my uncle?" he continued, not noticing my remark, although I saw by the flush on his face that it had told.

"I don't see, Maurice, that my affairs in any way concern you."

"You are a born beggar," he said, with a scornful laugh; "not only in pocket, but in your nature."

I did not answer. Much as my pride revolted at the insult, the old sensitiveness rose up still stronger, and it was with difficulty that I could restrain my tears.

"I would not be a dependant upon any one, I would break stones on the road rather."

"And yet you are one," I replied.

"I have a fortune of my own——"

"Which must be wasted by this time! Certain it is that you have debts which you cannot meet, for you are constantly bullying and wheedling uncle to pay them."

"So you have been listening—eaves-dropping—miserable little reptile!"

"And you want to marry Miss Morgan, in order to free yourself and have another fortune."

"If you take her name on your lips again, it will be the worse for you."

"She cannot be more degraded and insulted than she has been by your attentions; at least, my lips are not tainted with falsehood and sin."

"Milk-sop!"

"Better be that than a rouse and a gambler."

"I'll kill you; upon my soul, I will!" he exclaimed, taking a step forward, while an irrepressible fury broke over his face, rendering it absolutely revolting.

I did not stir, my eyes looked into his without flinching, and it was with difficulty I restrained the rage prompted by a deep sense of injury and wrong.

"Come on," I said; "bring as much new disgrace upon yourself as you feel disposed."

I think his passion had so completely overmastered him that he would have struck me, and I should have been glad, but, at that moment, Prudence came through the hall with a broom in her hand, prepared with her usual neatness, to brush away the withered vine leaves which littered the verandah.

"What's all this?" she said, quickly. "You look like a fiend, Maurice! I'm thinking you'd find yourself in a box if you touched Paul."

"Go back to your own part of the house!" thundered Maurice. "You have no business here."

"My business is wherever I choose to go," she replied, stoutly. "Girl and woman I haven't lived in this house forty and more years to be told my duty by you."

"If I had my way you wouldn't be here a day longer," he muttered.

"But you haven't your way, Mr. Maurice Redman," said Prudence, leaning her chin comfortably on the broomstick, and surveying him quite at her ease, "you haven't your way, and, what's more, you ain't a going to have it—just put that in your pipe and smoke it, my young lord; do, I beg!"

And Prudence tossed her head toward him disdainfully, and looked so irresistibly comical with her tall, angular figure twisted down so as to establish her pointed chin more securely on its resting-place, that I had much ado not to laugh.

"Your impertinence, and that of this young fellow are past endurance," said Maurice.

"But you can't stop it—that's a little beyond you!"

"I tell you to cease!" he exclaimed, furiously. "Confounded old hag!"

"Mr. Maurice," said Prudence, "I am only a servant, I haven't been anything else all my life, but I'd be above using such language. I nursed your father and your uncle, and my Paul's poor mother—there isn't one on 'em that didn't love and respect me, and it ill becomes you to talk so to an old woman who's given you nothing but kindness all your life."

"Then attend to your own affairs; you ought to know better than to meddle in what does not concern you."

"Anything that touches Paul concerns me," she replied; "I've stood between you many a time, and I ain't going to see a disturbance now."

"If you don't stop, I'll give you the pleasure of seeing me wring his neck."

"I don't think you will," said Prudence, thrusting out her chin and shaking her head, till her broad cap border rustled; "I really don't—why, you ain't the man—no, sir, you ain't."

"Don't talk any more, Prudence," I said, "it is quite useless. As for you, Maurice, you learned a long time ago, that there is a point beyond which I will not permit you to pass—you have reached it now, so go your way."

"Beggat, pitiful beggar!" he exclaimed.

Prudence suddenly brandished her broom so near his nose, that he was forced to retreat.

"Don't you say that agin!" she returned, really white with passion. "Don't you let another such word come out of your mouth in my hearing. If you do, I'll be at what I've been warned to do this some time."

"And what may that be?"

"Why to tell that old fool a thing or two that'll make him think twice afore he gives you his darter! Prudence is old, Mr. Maurice, but she isn't blind; the rheumatiz may trouble my walkin' a little, but it hain't affected my ears!"

"If you should dare——"

"Don't say dare to me! You've worn my patience out, that's what you've done! I've been a mother to you, waited on you since you was a baby, and a mighty cross brat you was too—but you've got the length of your tether. Jest you leave Paul alone, or as sure as I stand in these shoes, I'll tell Alice Morgan a few stories that will do your business up in short order."

Maurice muttered an oath, but he knew how resolute Prudence was when confident that she had right on her side, and he was glad to moderate his tone.

"Come, old lady," he said, with an affectation of playfulness, "don't let us quarrel; I only wanted to teaze your baby a little."

"More of a man than ever you'll be," retorted she, "a good, honest one too! Howsumever, I don't want no quarrel, the Lord knows! I've prayed over you, and sarched the Scriptures for help, and I'm willing to do anything for peace; but you must let Paul have it too, he's got as good a right as you have."

She walked to the farther end of the verandah and began sweeping diligently, making the withered leaves fly in a way which proved that her feelings were by no means subdued.

Maurice bent toward me, shaking his clenched fist, while his eyes glared like those of a wild animal.

"You shall repent this!" he whispered. "Mark my words, in less than six months I'll make you wish you had never been born."

I only smiled defiantly. How could he injure me? The threat did not deserve an answer. But Prudence turned at that instant and saw his movement.

"Hey day!" she exclaimed, taking a step forward, her broom brandished like a lance.

"Paul!" called my uncle from within—"Paul!"

I gave Maurice a parting sneer, which struck his passion like a knife; motioned Prudence to be quiet, and went into the house.

My uncle was standing by the door which led into his study, and, when he saw me, he entered the room, motioning me to follow.

"You and Maurice have been at your quarrels," he said; "I wish, Paul, you would be more patient."

"Would it not be well for him to acquire the virtue also?" I asked.

"He has been much petted and spoiled; Maurice is a great favorite with a large circle, he cannot endure being irritated and opposed by one younger than himself."

"I should never interfere with him, sir, if he would leave me in peace."

"I think you are quarrelsome," he replied, coldly, "impetuous and passionate."

The old fire kindled in my veins, but I would not allow it to break forth. At least my uncle had sheltered me—I had no right to command his affection.

"Sir," I said, "I have wished to talk with you ever since you came back. Are you at leisure now?"

"For a little while," he answered, uneasily, sitting down in his chair, with his face turned from the light. "What do you wish to say to me, Paul?"

"You told me that when I was nineteen you would not oppose my going away from here."

"Well?"

"I am six months over, sir."

"And what is it you wish to do?"

"To earn my own living! I am quite old enough to go into business, or study a profession."

"And what would you choose?"

I hesitated; the crimson mounted to my forehead, and my heart beat tumultuously at the thought of my exposing my cherished secret to those cold eyes.

"I shall be an author, sir."

My uncle smiled, not scornfully, but in such utter pity of my childish folly, that it was harder to bear than cutting words.

"The dream of your age, young gentleman! A garret and a bed of straw—all very romantic, but not at all pleasant when put in practice."

"Preferable to doing nothing; better far than being daily told I am a dependant and a beggar."

My uncle moved restlessly again; there was an expression upon his face that I could not understand—one I had often seen there when my future prospects were discussed.

"I have not called you so," he said, after a pause; "I have never thought of you in that way."

"Do not believe me ungrateful, uncle; trust me, I shall never cease to be thankful for all that you have done."

There was a momentary struggle visible on the tutored features, he shrunk like one striving

to silence some painful memory, then it passed, leaving him pale and cold.

"Never mind," he said; "we will not talk of the past—it makes me feel too old. I fear you will find your dreams impracticable, Paul; you had better lay them aside. In this country, literature may do for an amusement, but the man is mad who starts life depending upon it for his support."

"Then let me go into a shop—anything, so that I live on my own earnings."

"Our family has not been in the mercantile line," he replied, haughtily, "I do not choose to see my nephew carrying parcels."

"Oh! uncle, I would carry a hod with pleasure!" I exclaimed, passionately. "I would do anything to escape this life."

"The mere fantasy of youth—ungrateful too."

I sat down with a feeling of despair; his cruel, unsympathizing words wounded me deeply. But my strong will rose proudly—I would not be silenced like a child.

"Then make a choice for me, sir; something I must and will do. I have been brought up to feel that I must make my own way in the world; you have told me yourself that my poor father's speculations had ruined him——"

"Was I to blame?" he interrupted, angrily. "Do you mean to insinuate that it was my fault?"

"You know I did not, sir! I only wanted you to understand that I was accustomed to my situation, and ready to act for myself."

He turned away, his hand rustled the papers upon his desk, not searching for anything, but like a man struggling to retain his composure.

"Will you not advise me, sir?" I asked, more gently. "I do not ask any more aid. I have lived on your bounty too long—I was only your sister's child, and had——"

He started from his chair with a passion which overwhelmed me with astonishment.

"What do you mean by that?" he exclaimed.

"What is in your mind? There is some secret, some plot at the bottom of all this?"

The utter amazement depicted in my face restored him to himself. He sat down again, speaking quietly enough, though his fingers worked nervously upon the arms of his chair.

"I was violent—it is in our nature! So you wish to begin life; after all, you are quite right—every man in this land, no matter how wealthy he may be, should have a profession."

"And will you help me in my choice, sir?"

"I think it would be well for you to study law."

I disliked the profession, its drudgery and

miserable details were especially unpleasant to me, but I would have snatched eagerly at any opportunity to escape from my present life.

"I am quite willing," I said. "Can I go about it at once?"

"Patience, patience, young man!"

"But that will involve much expense," I said, after a moment's thought; "I could not enter the office of any lawyer of standing without paying a considerable sum."

"You seem to forget that I am one."

"It is so long since you have practiced, that I was scarcely aware you gave up any time to it."

"But I have my office; and my partner, Mr. Lennox, carries on the business."

"And I may enter there?"

"Wait one moment! At present he has several young men there; two of them will be admitted early in the spring, then there will be an opportunity for you."

"Must I wait so long?"

"It is not an eternity. Keep quiet until then, brush up your Latin and Greek with your old teacher; I will send you books to read and papers to copy, which will accustom you to what you will have to do. Does this plan meet your views?"

"I am ready to do whatever you decide is best for me."

"Then all that is settled, so do not fret any more. Our guests will go away soon, and Maurice will accompany them. I want you to promise that you will remain quietly here, improving yourself as much as possible, until such time as you can begin your studies under Lennox."

"I will certainly do so! I thank you very much, uncle, for all you have done, and your kindness shall not be thrown away."

"Kindness," he repeated, "kindness!"

There was the same struggle in his face, but

he conquered the goading thought, and rose with an assumed calmness.

"Go away now, Paul; I have letters to write. Stop—you may take these papers to copy, if you like."

"Shall I do them in the library?"

"You will be more alone in your room, and I wish you to avoid even the most trifling error."

I knew very well his reason for banishing me to my room, but I offered no remonstrance; indeed I was feeling too grateful for the course he had pointed out to rebel at a slight annoyance.

"I wish I could make you understand how thankful I am," I began, but he interrupted me with an impatient wave of the hand.

"I don't care for words—go away, go."

I obeyed in silence, at a loss to account for his agitation, which my sincere expressions could not have caused.

I went to my chamber as he had desired, but I could not work. I sat by the window and watched the whole party go out to drive, saw them return, saw Alice wandering up and down the flower garden, and her hasty retreat when Maurice approached. After a time, he and Mr. Morgan drove off together, I knew they were going into the county town, but still I kept my seat.

The pleasant October afternoon wore on. There was a golden haze upon the distant hills; the forest trees in the grounds were draped in their gorgeous colors; and the sad, soothing serenity of the autumn stole over the restlessness of my heart.

At length I saw Alice Morgan leave the house, and walk down the pathway which led to the run. I kept my seat for a time, but at length the wild wish in my soul would no longer be restrained. I seized my cap and hurried out-of-doors, following the footpath which she had trodden half an hour before.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## TEACHING SCHOOL AT HEMLOCK GROVE.

BY MARY W. JANVRIN, AUTHOR OF "PEACE."

IN my seventeenth summer, with all the honors of incipient womanhood fresh upon me, I became violently infected with the prevalent mania which raged among a clique of us—ten or twelve girls, comprising the senior class of "Willowdale Female Seminary"—viz: to teach school, and straightway began to cast about me for some locality wherein I might dispense knowledge to young America, as well as acquire that *quantum sufficit* of matronly dignity which I so especially coveted.

A few weeks passed. Nearly all the girls had been more fortunate than myself, succeeding in obtaining excellent schools in the country towns surrounding our somewhat urban home; and I had begun to despair, when one day the summons came, "Would I take the summer school at Hemlock Grove, a rather secluded country district midway between two large villages, and but a half score of miles from home?" "Hemlock Grove!" The name suggested a pleasant picture—an old-fashioned, moss-grown, country school-house, half hidden in cool, aromatic woods, where the wind went roving all day, and the shadows would lie heavy all the sultry summer afternoons. I always had an especial love for the feathery hemlock groves. I would go. As for the teaching part, why, had not some one of the old English poets written,

"Delightful task to rear the tender mind—  
To teach the young idea how to shoot?"

and, as I had no distrust of my own ample qualifications therefor, consequently the ordeal of passing a necessary examination before the superintending committee of Hemlock Grove district possessed for me no terrors; so the answer tendered to the stout farmer committee-man who awaited my decision was in the affirmative.

Then followed a busy, busy week. The aspirant for the teacher's honors, now that her fate was sealed, must go forth in the full panoply of her dignity. Her wardrobe must be remodeled—low necks and short sleeves must give place to the opposite, for "the mistress" must not seem too youthful, lest she should lose dignity. Books were packed; a supply of fancy needlework was laid in, for there would be long intervals between schools, when *such* collars

and *such* worsted work might be wrought; an affectionate leave was taken of all youthful associates; and, one pleasant Sunday evening in May, the young teacher found herself set down at the door of a neat white cottage, which was to be her boarding-home, and her trunks duly deposited therein.

But it must be confessed that, despite my professed bravery, and the "Oh! no, indeed," which I returned to my brother's query, "Don't you think you'll be homesick here?" it must be confessed that, when I sat down by the window of the little sitting-room, and saw the white horse which had brought me thither disappear up the long country road in the twilight; when, after a rather dull evening with Mr. and Mrs. Lane, (a young couple who, as I learned afterward, had "bid off" the teacher to board,) I asked to be shown to my room—the "spare chamber" which they had set aside for "the mistress," of whom, as I afterward learned, they stood slightly in awe; when I found myself at last alone among strangers, from under the shelter of the home roof, and on the morrow about to enter a career whose responsibilities I had scarcely considered, then a feeling of homesickness and desolation rushed over me, and, as my cheek pressed the white pillow, I actually (alas! for my "matronly dignity") sobbed myself to sleep.

The morrow came, and I was awakened by a bright May sun pouring his beams directly into my face. It was early. The household, consisting of the young farmer, his wife, and two children—a boy of four, and a girl baby—were probably astir; but I lay quietly surveying the room assigned me. Like all chambers in cottage houses, it had the sloping roof, and but one window, looking toward the east. I foresaw that the adjective "cool" would never be applied to it during the hot summer months. The ceiling was very white; a few pictures and a little mirror hung on the walls; a dressing-table, bureau, wash-stand, and a chair or two, were arranged quite primly about; a bright striped carpet covered the floor; the bed itself was a miracle of snowy linen, and side by side stood my two trunks, ranged stiffly against the wall. The sight of these recalled me. I thought of my new occupation; and, shaking off idleness, sprang up to

make my toilet, and to hear presently the tinkle, tinkle of a little bell at the foot of the stairs, interlarded by the call of little four-year-old Frank Lane—"Cool-marm! 'Cool-marm! p'ease come down! Breakfast—dinner ready!"

Breakfast over, at which I found my host and hostess more inclined to sociability than on the preceding evening, and the little Frank evincing a strong desire to cultivate my acquaintance by sundry sly dips of his spoon into my coffee cup, I prepared for my *debut* as prime official in "Hemlock Grove school-house." And so, turning from the grassy lane leading out from my boarding-house into the highway, I lifted my eyes to greet the Mecca of my thought-pilgrimage—the old school-house—nestling among the shadows of the dark hemlocks.

*Oh! tempora. Oh! mores.* The dream faded, and in its stead came *such* a reality! Barren, dusty, and sunny, stretched away the road I was daily to travel for five months to come, bounded on each side by straggling stone walls, under which grew burdocks and mullens, and beyond which lay low, rocky, sterile pastures. Perched on a hill at a short distance, with no vestige of a tree in sight, close beside the highway on a ledge of cobble stones, stood a low, weather-stained building, whose door standing ajar, the wide-swung wooden shutters, and the crowd of children about the door, proclaimed it that temple of science whose shaded walls and beautiful surroundings had risen very fair in my imagination, yecept a country school-house!

And this old tumble-down, hot, unsheltered building, was to be my home for at least six hours of five days every week for five months to ensue! And the children: I felt very sure they were a set of untamed little savages, instead of the bright-eyed little troop fancy had conjured; for, just then, the horde caught sight of the new teacher, and set up a shout, "There's the mistress! There's the mistress!" followed by a desperate rush for the school-house. Already I felt a sinking at my heart, and a strong willingness to escape from expectant authority. But it would never do. The eyes of many (twenty-five, certainly!) of the future men and women of the land were upon me; I mentally quoted, "*Veni, vidi, vici*," and mounted the high stone, which purported to be the door-step of Hemlock Grove school-house, and courageously entered.

In a few minutes, finding myself installed in a high-backed chair, similar to those used in all farm-house kitchens, and in the neighborhood of (for I could not bring myself to *sit at it*, lest, from its great height, it should topple over and

crush me) a tall, old-fashioned desk; thus, "clothed in a little brief authority," behold the candidate for a teacher's honors surveying her kingdom before her. And a queer realm it was, too, condensed within the brown walls of that room! And my subjects, a motley group were they, to be sure: some bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked children, but the greater portion sunburnt, freckled, bare-footed, and all looking with broad stares toward the occupant of the straight-backed chair on the platform. And, away up in the farthest extremity of the room, his head peeping above the high-backed desk, I caught a glimpse of a little tow-head belonging to an ambitious five-year-old boy, who, only despising the lower forms where the little ones always sat, had determined to secure that acme of his desires, "the back seat," at the commencement of the term, by the tenure of squatter sovereignty. That sight was too much! I, Ellen Bradley, schoolmistress, actually found myself in the committal of a breach of dignity; and, even at the risk of topping over the tall wooden desk, which stood, like the Colossus of Rhodes, astride the platform, I rose from the straight-backed chair and hid behind the family desk-lid, to enjoy what school-girls call "a giggle."

But the forenoon wore away in the usual routine of a country school on its opening day. Names and ages were taken, class-books examined, and classes arranged; the A-B-C Darrians, or "Infant Artillery," were duly called up, to read from their seats on the lowest forms; while the aspiring Josiah, on the back seat, was suffered to retain his location, even at the risk of being thought "partial" by the whole school; and, when I heard the distant village bells ringing twelve, which hour was also pointed out by the hands of the little lepine watch I had hung on a nail by the window near the desk, I gave the signal for dismissal.

The afternoon also passed quickly: and as the sun slanted toward the west, I turned the key in the lock, and walked homeward with the honors of my first day of teacherhood upon my devoted head.

That night, ere I slept, I endeavored to imagine that I had passed a very pleasant and useful day; to fortify myself in which resolution, I reread the following passage in a letter which the postmaster of Willowdale had handed me:

"When the rosy-fingered Aurora, on Monday morn, leaves the saffron-beds to Tithon, she will behold you leaving the paternal mansion, to take a seat in the chair of the 'People's College.'

I need not say, Nelly, that I wish you entire success. While filling this station, you will, of course, feel it your duty to command and compel obedience—to cultivate promptitude in action, and decision of character. Let your presence at all times pervade the whole school-room. I have the greatest confidence in your success, if your will is to it, without which very little can be done under any circumstances."

Much more might be quoted from "somebody's" letter, (and, *en passant*, it might not be improper to acquaint the reader that "somebody" was no less than a certain "friend" of mine, who, in years past, had "fitted" himself at the somewhat celebrated Willowdale Academy, but now wrote his cognomen "Gorham Bourne, Senior, Yale College,") but, inasmuch as the remnant of that epistle related more particularly to the private personal career of Miss Ellen Bradley than to her public life, as written here, she thinks it best unrecorded.

Well, three days went by; and on Wednesday afternoon occurred the customary "examination" of the teacher before the superintending committee, in accordance with which form, should the examinee give solid proof of her qualifications, a written "certificate," setting forth this fact, was provided by said committee, and her vocation suffered to proceed at once; but if, either from ignorance or timidity, she failed in responding satisfactorily to the questions propounded from Euclid, Astronomy, Surveying, down to the simplest rudiments of Geography or Arithmetic, (and all this to guide children in their first tottering steps through the Primer!) then, disgraced, shorn of her brief dignity, the young aspirant is discarded, and forthwith departs for the home of her father, "a sadder, if not a wiser girl."

"But don't *you* be frightened, Miss Bradley!" said good little Mrs. Lane, as, on Wednesday P. M., the same committee-man with whom I had closed the bargain to come to Hemlock Grove, drove up in his buggy to take me to the village where resided the examining committee. "Don't *you* be afraid of 'em one bit! There was Sarah Underhill—a fast-rate scholar, everybody in Northwood owned—and when she went before the committee to be examined for our school, last year, she jest got scairt, forgot everything they asked her, and blundered so, that they set her down for a real ignoramus, and wouldn't give her a certificate. 'Twas a real shame, too, for Sarah had just lost her father, and wanted to earn something to help her mother and the little children along. I never *did* like Squire Gordon from that day!

They got an ugly old maid to keep the school after Sarah left; but she was cross as pizon, and they had to turn her off for lickin' poor little lame Sammy Hill half to death. Jest don't *you* be afraid of Squire Gordon one atom!"

And thus, "forewarned, forearmed," I went to the encounter with the formidable Squire Gordon, the Ajax of the Hemlock Grove examining committee; and, after a short, brilliant skirmish, came off victorious. The folded paper, which I bore back to show little Mrs. Lane as token of my ample ability to teach all the Hemlock Grove urchins, ran after this fashion:

*Hemlock Grove Village, June 1st, 185-.*

"To whom it may concern:—This may certify that we, the undersigned, have examined Miss Ellen Bradley, and find her suitably qualified to teach the English language grammatically, and the rudiments of Arithmetic and Geography, agreeably to the laws of the state of New Hampshire.

WILLIAM GORDON, Esq.,	} Super't School Committee."
F. H. HERVEY,	
TIMOTHY REEVES, M. D.,	

So I displayed the precious document; and not Achilles, going forth against the Trojans, felt securer of his triumph than did I, Ellen Bradley, schoolmistress. That night, I penned a closely written sheet to "Gorham Bourne, New Haven, Connecticut," in which I detailed my three days' experience as teacher, also my signal success with the school committee, besides sundry protestations of undying—don't you wish I'd written it, reader?—which could have no possible interest to other than the parties concerned.

Thus far, reader, have I related the sunny side of my three days' brief experience at Hemlock Grove. But my picture has its shadows, and mine soon began to gather; not, indeed, in the shape of any great trial, but in nameless, little petty annoyances; and, most of all, that terrible feeling of homesickness no power could exorcise.

The days were long and monotonous in the old tumble-down school-house on the hill. Somehow, the children seemed dull and stupid, and all the teacher's energies could not waken them from the flagging, stereotyped routine; and, save the few bright-eyed ones whom she had selected as the white lambs of her flock on that first day, and whose advancement rewarded her toil, Ellen Bradley, schoolmistress, had little hope or heart for the twenty-five urchins who daily went in and out Hemlock Grove school-house. And yet, let her not forget to record that Josiah—urged on, doubtless, by the

same ambitious spirit that led him into "the back seat"—rapidly conquered his alphabet, rushed through the Primer and First Book, and one day astonished the mistress by bringing half a quire of foolscap, sewed within paper covers, and a yellow goose quill, beseeching her to "make a pen," and "set a copy," in his new writing-book. And the mistress looked smilingly down upon the owner of the little, quizzical tow head, surmounting the lean, diminutive body, and complied. Josiah and desperate ambition had conquered.

But it was mostly homesickness that haunted me. Not only lying awake half the night in my neat, nice, but stifling attic room, did I long for the airy, spacious chamber I had shared with my sister in the old homestead; but at morn, noon, and all the long, lonely summer evenings, when I watched the yellow moon wheel high over the trees above farmer Lane's cottage, did I miss the cheerful home group, and the band of young companions I had drawn about me there, and sigh for the pleasant moonlight walks I knew they were taking without me down the quiet streets of Willowdale.

Farmer Lane and his wife were well enough in their way, but little company for me. Hemlock Grove was the dreariest of all country places. There were no young people in the neighborhood; and the married ones held "the mistress" too much in awe to invite her, in accordance with the custom in most country villages, out to tea; and seemed to quite forget her existence, save as the "young woman" whom the committee had hired to teach their children to read, spell, and write.

To be sure I had semi-monthly visits home, when the family white horse and buggy bore me away from Hemlock Grove, on Friday night, to be returned thither again, "with care," on each succeeding Monday morning; also, a fortnight's vacation in "haying-time," when some of the bigger boys and girls were wanted "to rake after." But when, at these visits home, I was frequently asked, "Why, Ellen, how pale and thin you are getting! It doesn't agree with you, teaching?" I invariably made answer "Oh! I never felt better in my life." (Heaven pardoned me the fib, I hope!) And, as for teaching, "Oh! I liked it immensely!" And so, pride forbidding the acknowledgment of so girlish (?) a feeling as homesickness, I resolutely set my face toward Hemlock Grove again.

More weeks dragged by, and it grew near the latter part of September. Affairs had brightened a little in the school-room. My best scholars grew smarter of late—and the stupid

ones less stupid. The superintending committee had visited the school several times; stiff, pompous Squire Gordon had actually unbent from his dignity, patted little Josiah on his head for his progress in writing, and concluded a long speech to the children, with a flattering encomium of "their young, but faithful and accomplished teacher." And I knew, farther, from the fact that old Mrs. Deacon Hubbard sent over an invitation to tea, that I must be awaking some recognition of my merits in the breasts of the prosy, "old foggy" Hemlock Groveites. But, though I mechanically arrayed myself in my best blue barege, and demurely sipped my tea from my hostess' best pink china; while the minister's son, just home from Harvard, did me the honor to sit on my left at table, and talk very familiarly of Longfellow and Agassiz, and "the old prex" there up at Cambridge, and walked home with me that evening to farmer Lane's cottage—though the summer's heats had given place to autumn's cooler airs—still the days dragged by, interminably long, I, growing thinner and paler the while, till at last even Mrs. Lane noticed me, and "hoped I wasn't going to get sick before the school was finished up."

I immediately assured her that I should not, inly wondering if, *after* my school was finished up, she would care in the slightest—she, or *anybody else*; for, reader, I must reveal here a little secret which had more to do with my pale cheeks than all the dull routine of life, or the homesickness, there at Hemlock Grove—which secret was, that, for five long weeks, I had heard no word from "somebody" at Yale College. I had excused a week or two's silence, in consideration that it was near the close of the term; but now three weeks of the long summer vacation had passed, and no letter! It was too much. I vainly wondered—and, day by day, looked for his promised appearance—walked over to the three-mile distant village post-office, to inquire for the letter which never came—thought over everything I had ever heard about the beautiful daughters of the professors there at New Haven, and dreamed nightly that one of them (how I hated the Circe!) had ensnared my lover away from me, and left me there to die of grief at that desolate Hemlock Grove. And so, what with the anxiety, and, more, a severe cold I had taken by getting drenched in a heavy shower while returning from the distant post-office, one day I went to the school-house with flushed cheeks and aching head, too proud to acknowledge to myself that I was ill, and give up and go home,



though much too sick to help the noisy children through with their morning's lessons.

"Please, Miss Bradley, I am so sorry your head aches!" lisped out a little blue-eyed girl, to whom I had become exceedingly attached, coming up to my desk when the morning session was over; and even the shy little Josiah brought a flower that afternoon as I re-entered the school-room.

Leaving my dinner untasted on my plate, I determined, spite of the fast-increasing headache and dizziness, to drag through the day. But the buzz of lessons only confused me; the children never seemed so noisy as then; and when I touched the bell on the desk as signal for the afternoon recess, the patter of little feet over the floor smote on my excited brain like thunder.

I dropped the heavy shade over the window on the platform, sat down, and, leaning my head on the window-sill, clasped my hands over my forehead, weeping, for the first time, homesick tears. And, sitting thus, it was not to be supposed that I could hear the tread of a horse's hoofs, or the sound of carriage wheels; but certain it was that I did hear a quick, impetuous step in the entry, the hasty closing to of the door to shut out the curious gaze of the children, who peered in after "that handsome gentleman come to see the mistress," and my own Gorham's astonished, "Good heavens, Nelly! In tears! and thin as a shadow! What does this mean?" as he clasped me tightly in his arms. And certain it is, also, that, standing there—happier than I had been for many long weeks—I told him all: how very, very foolish I had been, to pine away and get sick, and all because he had not written me.

"But I have written you as usual, Nelly!" he said, looking surprised in his turn. "Why have not my letters reached you? I cannot think, unless—ah! I'll wager *this* solves the mystery," and he broke out into a merry laugh, drawing forth a sealed packet as he spoke, superscribed, "Not to be opened till you see the pretty school-mistress at Hemlock Grove," opening which, forth fell a half dozen letters—"Here's every letter I've written you since commencement week—five, six of 'em—this is practical joking with a vengeance! I shan't forgive Dick in a hurry! You see, Nelly, my chum, Dick Osborne, is at the bottom of this. I suspected something when he gave me this package. You know, Nelly, we've been in the habit of playing off our jokes on one another, and I'd rather 'got' Dick several times this term, and he vowed he'd be up with me. But *this* is carrying the thing a

little too far—pretending he'd taken off my letters to mail when I missed them from my table! But how happened it, Nelly, that you *answered* my letters as usual, if you didn't *receive* them?" asked Gorham.

It was now my turn for astonishment. "I have not written you for four weeks!" I said.

"And I've had *two* letters from you since then!" he exclaimed, drawing them from his pocket. "The deuce! if I don't believe Dick counterfeited *your* hand too! Now I think of it, he asked to keep, that he might copy it, that little poem you wrote for me—you know, Nell, I always regarded Dick like a brother, and had told him all about you."

"But here is the post-mark, 'Hemlock Grove!' How could *that* be done?" I asked, scrutinizing the letters, which, though superscribed in a hand strangely like my own, surely I had never written.

"Sure enough—let me see!" mused Gorham, in perplexity. "But ah! I've got it!" and he struck his forehead. "Dick's got a cousin—young lawyer Wallace—practicing down here at this confounded Hemlock Grove. Of course he just let *him* into the frolic, and sent 'em down here for him to mail! He knows you—he wrote to Dick once that 'they'd got a deuced pretty school-marm down here whom he'd half a mind to make love to.' Did you ever see him, Nelly?"

I did remember now this young Wallace, as a Byronic-looking gentleman, who had lounged into Squire Gordon's office on the memorable occasion of my "examination," perhaps for a presentation to the candidate; but had thought no more of him till now.

"Yes, *he's* at the bottom of it all! Dick would do anything to have his joke!" exclaimed Gorham. "But, the rascal! I'll never forgive him for carrying it so far."

But I will not linger to recount how Gorham's indignation gradually cooled—how we had a long talk there in the old school-house, ignoring sadly the duties of a schoolmistress, till, suddenly, I perceived that the hour hand of my little watch on the nail overhead was getting far past three, when Gorham himself hastily rang the bell and summoned the children from their long recess. Nor will I recount the long "speech" he afterward delivered to the wondering urchins, in which quotations from Latin, Greek, and Hebrew were blended, "just to see the youngsters open their eyes," he said; nor how he finally closed with a brilliant peroration on the careers of Julius Caesar, Scipio, Hannibal, Demosthenes, Cicero, Napoleon, and George Washington, assuring his auditory that each and

every one of them (pointing especially in the direction of the awe-struck Josiah, the tip of whose ears were just visible above his desk,) might successfully emulate either, or all of the aforementioned celebrities, and thus transmit their names and fame to future ages. Modesty would alike forbid his sudden descent from this brilliant flight to make mention of their "beloved teacher," who, he informed them, being ill of a bad head (*heart*) ache, had commissioned him to say to them—each boy and girl, separately, individually, and collectively—that they had full permission to put on their hats, take books in hand, or tin pails on their arms, and wend their way to the homes of their fathers—or, in plain English, "school was dismissed."

And then Gorham turned his handsome, mirthful face toward me—took down the little lepro from its nail and put the chain over my neck—tied the strings of my bonnet, and handed me my parasol; and, going to the tall desk, began gathering up my text-books, noticing, with a roguish smile, a handsomely bound volume of Longfellow's *Evangeline*, which had been his last parting gift.

"Now what are you doing, Gorham?" I remonstrated. "I shall want them here to-morrow. I never carry these home at night."

"No, you won't, either, little one!" he replied, decidedly. "A dignified book-case—this old hencoop on stilts—for *Evangeline*! So you see, Miss Nelly, I'll just take your books, and you into the bargain; and, after an hour or so for

you to pack up in and get a cup of tea at your boarding-place, I shall take you, by a very pleasant drive with my fast trotter, back to your home at Willowdale. You've worn yourself almost to a shadow now in this backwoods, uncongenial, country town. Why, I should die of the blues here myself in a week: and, if you don't have a fever after it, I'm mistaken! And who's going to take care of my little school-marm, if I don't do it? Come, let's lock up this old shanty, and get among civilized regions once more! You are not afraid to trust me, and my plans for your welfare, Nelly?"

No, I was not afraid to trust Gorham Bourne then—else I should not have put my hand in his, and complied with his wishes—I should not have ridden home that moonlit September night, five years ago, from dreary, barren, uncongenial Hemlock Grove, whereunto, in capacity of schoolmistress, I never returned—nor should I be the happy wife of a year I am to-day, with a pair of dark eyes looking over my shoulder as I write, to read my manuscript, and a deep-toned, laughing voice exclaiming, "Why, Nelly, what's all this? You turning *blue*—and actually writing a story for Peterson, 'Teaching School at Hemlock Grove?' Bah! the remembrance of a pale, woe-begone face I found there once, gives me the chills whenever I think of it; and I should imagine that you would suffer enough in just thinking of it, without taking the trouble to write it all over again!"